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Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Date: 10 March 2014
My Ref:
Your Ref:

Committee:
Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

Date: Tuesday, 18 March 2014
Time: 9.30 am
Venue: Shropshire Room, Craven Arms Community Centre, Newington Way,
Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 9PS

You are requested to attend the above meeting.
The Agenda is attached

Claire Porter
Corporate Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Members of Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

George Chancellor (Chairman)	Ian Dormer
Tim Barker (Vice Chairman)	Carol Griffiths
Alison Caffyn (Vice Chairman)	Dawn Griffiths
Heather Kidd	Geoff Grimes
Cecilia Motley	Alan Jones
David Turner	Sue Jones
Chris Turley	Jenny Joy
Harriet Carty	Jo Jury
Edward Dugdale	Bill Klemperer
Fiona Pidduck	Sue Lee
Elizabeth Thomas	Marc Liebrecht
James Williamson	Vivienne Parry
Dr Keith Bartlett	Ronald Repath
Gillian Binks	David C. Smith
Tony Bostock	Leo Smith

Sarah Bury
Lee Chapman
Veronica Cossons
Dave Cowell

Andrew Tyley
Simon West
Caroline Whiteman
Michael Whithouse

Your Committee Officer is:

Tim Ward Committee Officer

Tel: 01743 252739

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence

2 Note of the last meeting (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve the note of the last meeting held on 19 November 2014

3 AONB Partnership Activity Update (Pages 7 - 16)

This paper provides members with a summary update of recent activity of the AONB Partnership staff team and a budget update.

4 Shropshire Council Reorganisation

To receive a verbal report

5 Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme

To receive a presentation from Joy Howells, Landscape Partnership Manager

6 LEADER 2015 - 2019 (Pages 17 - 24)

This paper makes a recommendation for the AONB Partnership to make the decision to bid to be the LEADER Local Action Group for the Shropshire Hills for the 2015 – 20 round of funding.

7 Proposed Clee Hill Heritage Project (Pages 25 - 28)

This paper gives a summary of the proposed Clee Hill Heritage Project

8 Planning Update

The AONB Manager will give a verbal update

9 Dates of Future Meetings

To confirm the dates of future meeting as: -

Tuesday 1 July 2014 (**Please note change of date to the previously notified**)
Tuesday 18 November 2014

Agenda Item 2



<u>Committee and Date</u> Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership
18 March 2014
9.30am

<u>Item</u>
2
Public

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2013 9.30am – 11.00am

Responsible Officer Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

Telephone: (01743) 252739

Present

Local Authorities

Shropshire Council

Cllr Tim Barker (Vice Chair)

Cllr Heather Kidd

Cllr David Turner

Telford & Wrekin Council

Cllr Chris Turley

Statutory/Voluntary Agencies & Individual members

Individual Member

Alison Caffyn (Vice Chair)

Individual member

Harriet Carty

Individual Member

George Chancellor (Chair)

Individual Member

Edward Dugdale

Individual member

Fiona Pidduck

Individual member

Liz Thomas

Individual member

James Williamson

Town & Parish Council representative

Keith Bartlett

Town & Parish Council representative

Jenny Collingridge

Town & Parish Council representative

Dom Wilson

British Horse Society

Ronald Repath

Butterfly Conservation

Mike Williams

Campaign to Protect Rural England

Sarah Bury

Institute of Chartered Foresters

Marc Liebrecht

John Voysey

Land, Life and Livelihoods

Gill Binks

Long Mynd & District Bridleways Association

Sue Lee

National Farmers Union

Carol Griffiths

National Trust

Dave Cowell

Natural England

Dawn Griffiths

Ramblers Association

Sue Jones

SASTAK

Caroline Whiteman

Shropshire Geological Society

David C Smith

Shropshire Hills Tourism

Lee Chapman

Shropshire Tourism

Geoff Grimes

Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Veronica Cossons

Strettons Civic Society

Ian Dormor

Upper Onny Wildlife Group and Shropshire

Leo Smith

Ornithological Society

Walford & North Shropshire College

Phil Ridley

Observers/Officers

Shropshire Council

John Harrison (Environment and Sustainability Manager)
Joy Tetsill (Planning Policy Team)
Tim Ward (Committee Officer)

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership staff team

Pete Banford (LEADER Co-Ordinator)
Clare Fildes (Development Officer)
Phil Holden (AONB Partnership Manager)

Welcome and Apologies for Absence

1. The AONB Partnership Manager informed the meeting that following the biannual review of membership, the following had been appointed as individual Members: -

Alison Caffyn
Harriet Carty
George Chancellor
Edward Dugdale
Fiona Pidduck
Elizabeth Thomas
James Williamson

He advised the meeting that David Francis and Tom Eyre had not sought reappointment, and formally thanked them for their contribution to the work of the Partnership.

2. The AONB Partnership Manager informed the meeting that the following organisations had been appointed as members: -

Butterfly Conservation
Church Stretton Civic Society
National Trust
SASTAK
Shropshire Tourism

He advised that the Offa's Dyke Association had not sought reappointment.

3. The AONB Partnership Manager welcomed all the new and returning members to the Partnership.
4. Apologies for absence were received from Tony Bostock (Severn Rivers Trust), Bill Klemperer (English Heritage), Rachel Taylor (Telford & Wrekin Council), Michael Watney (Country Land and Business Association), Simon West (Forestry Commission) and Michael Whithouse (Caring for God's Acre).

Welcome to new Members and signing of Membership Accord

5. The AONB Partnership Manager advised members that copies of the Membership Accord had been circulated with the papers for the meeting and asked that all

members sign the Accord and return it to the Committee Officer at the end of the meeting.

Election of Chair, Vice Chairs and Seats to the Management Board

6. The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that one nomination had been received for the position of Chair.

It was resolved that Mr George Chancellor be elected Chair of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.

Mr Chancellor took the chair and thanked the Partnership for re-electing him. He advised the Partnership that he would be looking to hand over the role of Chair in the near future.

7. The AONB Partnership Manager reminded the meeting that under the Terms of Reference, one of the Vice Chairs should be a representative of Shropshire Council and one from among the other members. He advised that two nominations had been received for the two positions of Vice Chair.

It was resolved that Cllr Tim Barker and Ms Alison Caffyn be elected Vice Chairs of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.

8. The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that four nominations had been received for membership of the Management Board.

It was resolved that Cllr Cecilia Motley, Cllr David Turner, Mr James Williamson and Lady Veronica Cossons be elected to serve on the Management Board.

The AONB Partnership Manager advised that there were still two vacancies on the Management Board and that these would be filled by co-option.

Note of Last Meeting

9. Mr Wilson commented that minute 18 did not accurately reflect what he had said and asked that the minute be altered to read: -

"Mr Wilson commented that the local community was divided on the issue of housing but virtually unanimous in its opposition to the New House Farm proposals. He went on to say that the Town Council recognised the need for some development of both housing and employment land to ensure the future viability of the town, but that, like the residents, the Council wanted as little encroachment as possible into the surrounding countryside. He added that the New House Farm site now proposed had not been suggested by the Town Council and that they would be objecting to its inclusion."

10. It was resolved that subject to the above amendment the note of the meeting held on 9 July 2013 be approved.

AONB Partnership Activity Update

11. A report had been circulated updating the Partnership on recent activity by the AONB Partnership Team.

12. The AONB Partnership Manager informed the meeting that the delivery phase of the Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS) was under way, and that the six members of staff had been in place since September and that they were currently based in the AONB office at Craven Arms. The LPS team would be moving into an office in Chirbury, but the move had been delayed due to difficulties with getting the broadband connection set up. Mrs Kidd offered to let the office have a contact within BT in an effort to move things along.
13. The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that extra funding for the Sustainable Development Fund had been obtained from the Jean Jackson Charitable Trust, and that a total of £24,160 had been awarded to 12 projects. He went on to say that a review of the membership of the SDF Panel had been carried out.
14. The AONB Partnership Manager informed the meeting that a great deal of project planning work had taken place for the proposed Clee Hill Heritage Project and that representatives from the HLF would be visiting the area in November.
15. The AONB Partnership Manager advised the Partnership that professional advice was being sought with regard to the drafting of the constitution for the proposed new charitable body.
16. Mr Voysey asked for an update on the Woodlands Project. The AONB Partnership Manager advised him that the project had finished in March 2013 as the available funding had come to an end. He went on to say that the project had been very successful and that he would have liked to be able to continue it. The AONB Development Officer informed the meeting that she was currently looking to develop a project for the Marches Uplands as a successor to the AONB Farming Project, and that part of this would be looking at farm scale woodlands. Mrs Carty advised the meeting that the Woodland Trust were currently applying for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a national project that may be of interest.

AONB Management Plan 2014-19

17. A report presenting to members the revised draft of the new AONB Management Plan for 2014 -19 had been circulated.
18. The AONB Partnership Manager informed the meeting that the draft plan had been submitted to Natural England for their formal observations, and would then go to the local authorities for final approval. He then took the meeting through the major changes within the document.
19. Cllr Barker commented that the statement on page 34 regarding housing in Church Stretton was potentially misleading, since even though there was not designated development in the hinterland of Church Stretton, the single plot exception site scheme was expected to lead to an 18% increase in new housing in the settlements around the town.
20. Mr Smith suggested an amendment to the second paragraph of the section regarding priority species, and went on to say that further content on actions to protect critically endangered species was needed. Lady Cossons commented that there was a lot of good work on biodiversity being done by different organisations and went on to ask whether it would be possible to draw all this together. The AONB Partnership Manager agreed that there was a need to set up a small group to do this.
21. The Chair thanked members for their input and asked that if members had any further comments that they pass them to the AONB Partnership Manager.

LEADER Update

22. The meeting received a report giving an update on the close of the current 2009-13 round of LEADER, and setting out proposed activity for the 2014 year of LEADER transition funding.
23. The LEADER Co-ordinator advised the meeting that the Shropshire Hills Local Action Group (LAG) was the first in the country to allocate all its money, with 99% already claimed, leaving £12,543 to be claimed by the end of December. He went on to say that he would be carrying out a programme evaluation as the current programme drew to a close.
24. The LEADER Co-ordinator advised the meeting that the LAG had made a successful application to Defra for LEADER Transition Funding which would cover a full time extension to the LEADER Co-ordinator's post for 2014 and some other minor costs. He went on to inform the meeting that the aims of the transition funding were to:
 - To review performance of the current programme, identifying and addressing areas for further development.
 - To set out a new Local Development Strategy (LDS), to be submitted by August 2014, and build relationships with the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership and other local stakeholders.
25. The LEADER Co-ordinator reminded members that the Partnership had expressed an aspiration regarding being a LAG for the next round of LEADER, but had not yet made a firm decision on this. Further guidance from Defra was awaited which would allow a clearer consideration of issues regarding the fit of the new LEADER priorities on economic development with the primary purpose of the AONB, and potentially about the geographical area to be covered by the LAG. He added that if there was an unresolvable conflict, there would be a need to look at a different approach that may require the development of a new LAG, but hopefully this would not be the case. However, as the current LAG with the transition funding, we had the responsibility to prepare the new LEADER Local Development Strategy for the Shropshire Hills, and look to the best means of delivery.
26. The Chair thanked the LEADER Co-ordinator for all his work to date and commented that the programme had been very good both in the levels of funding that had been brought into the area and the effectiveness of the projects funded.

Local Nature Partnership

27. The AONB Partnership Manager updated members briefly on developments with the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Partnership (LNP). He reminded the meeting that Local Nature Partnerships had come out of the Natural Environment White Paper. He went on to say that currently there was no funding for the running of LNPs, and that Dan Wrench, Biodiversity Officer at Shropshire Council was supporting the Partnership alongside his other work. Government guidance encouraged links between LNPs and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).
28. Mr Harrison commented that there were two LNPs within the Marches LEP area, the second one covering Herefordshire, and that Cllr Cecilia Motley was acting Chair of the Shropshire & Telford & Wrekin LNP.
29. The Chair noted the valuable role of the Local Nature Partnership, and looked forward to further information in future.

Cllr Barker left the meeting prior to the commencement of discussion on the Church Stretton SAMDev Site Allocation.

Church Stretton SAMDev Site Allocation

30. The Chair reminded members that this matter had been discussed at the last meeting and that it was felt that an agenda item needed to be included at this meeting. He then introduced Joy Tetsill, Planning Policy Officer for Shropshire Council who was the officer dealing with the Site Allocation process in the Church Stretton area.
31. The Planning Policy Officer reminded members that in a previous position she had been Planning Officer at the AONB Partnership and that she understood their concerns. She informed members that following a number of stages, the SAMDev process was nearing its end. A document giving final recommendations would be published in March 2014 for final consultation, the scope of which would be limited to tests of 'soundness' in the decisions made. She went on to say that following this consultation period, an independent inspector from the Planning Inspectorate would be appointed to carry out a public hearing prior to the document being approved. The Planning Policy Officer advised that she would be recommending the New House Farm Site for inclusion in the SAMDev document for Church Stretton, as it was the only site that was deliverable.
32. Mr Wilson commented that the Town Council had expressed a preference for other sites put forward and would be objecting to the inclusion of the New House Farm site on a number of grounds. Mr Chapman commented that 94% of people that had attended a public meeting regarding the SAMDev sites had been opposed to the one at New House Farm, and for that reason the local ward councillors were not in support of the site. Discussion followed as to whether the other sites put forward, including for employment use, were felt to be deliverable or not.
33. It was noted that there were concerns that the proposed new access road to the New House Farm site for housing could lead to further development in future. It was also noted that the proposed development of a Visitor Centre on the site had potential to draw people out of the town centre, with economic disadvantages. Ms Caffyn said the proposal made assumptions about tourism benefits which were questionable.
34. The Chair thanked the Planning Policy Officer for attending the meeting and thanked members for their input. The process for the Council to progress to final decisions was noted, and it was hoped that the discussion at today's meeting had been useful.

Date of Next Meeting

35. The dates of meetings of the Partnership for 2014 were confirmed as: -
Tuesday 18 March 2014
Tuesday 8 July 2014 (N.B. this date however needs changing), and
Tuesday 18 November 2014.



Committee and Date Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership 18 March 2014

Item 3

AONB PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY UPDATE

Responsible Officer Phil Holden, AONB Partnership Manager
e-mail: phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01588 674088 Fax 01588 674099

Summary

This paper provides members with a summary update of recent activity of the AONB Partnership staff team, and a budget update.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to note the information provided and offer comments.

KEY AREAS OF PROGRESS IN 2013-14 TO DATE (April 2013 - present)

Take and co-ordinate action to conserve and enhance natural beauty, to promote wellbeing, enjoyment and understanding and to further sustainable development.

- **Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme** – Delivery Phase under way from July '13 with Joy Howells as Landscape Partnership Manager. New team of six in place from September. The Scheme is operating as an identifiably separate project, but part of the AONB team. Scheme launch event on 12 November, with 70 people attending. Meetings of Landscape Partnership Board and other groups. Major external contracts let, including for LiDAR survey, and for delivery of 'Rescuing Rocks and Overgrown Relics' project. First public events held, and activity in Wales to draw down funding from Natural Resources Wales. See <http://www.stiperstonesandcorndon.co.uk/>
- **LEADER** project claims and reporting complete for 2009-13 programme. Hosted exchange visit for 'Growing Gastronomists' co-operation project on local food with Loir Valley, Estonia & Warwickshire LAGs (project awarded Nordic-Baltic LEADER Co-operation Award). Transition programme under way with Defra funding, discussions about next round of LEADER 2015-20, contact with LEP, and Partnership workshop held on priorities for new Local Development Strategy.
- £24,160 allocated in **Sustainable Development Fund** grants to 12 projects for 2013-14 with additional funding from Jean Jackson Charitable Trust. Membership review of SDF Panel completed. Final claims and reports completed for 2012-13 projects, available at <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/looking-after/sdf/>. Panel for 2014-15 grants on 20 March.
- **Farming Project** – completed in July, with a total of 203 one to one farm advice contacts made. Final report and evaluation published. Work with 15 schools and 3 Farming Advocates. Children's book about farming in the Shropshire Hills published. New Uplands project being considered with Herefordshire.

- **Rivers.** 2013-14 site works ongoing for SITA funded **River Clun Freshwater Pearl Mussel Project**, virtually complete. Volunteer involvement with tree planting and river monitoring. £90k of additional funding secured from Natural England for Clun catchment related work, including riparian habitat management works, erosion control at critical locations and strategy for control of Himalayan Balsam. Catchment Project Assistant post extended. Wetland opportunity mapping and Highways sediment reports published. Meetings of Clun Catchment Partnership held, and ongoing input to Teme Partnership, Clun Steering Group, Clun Field Officers Group and Clun Nutrient Management Plan Group. The web pages are developing as a significant reference of information, and are where reports on the River Clun commissioned by Natural England are made publicly available <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/looking-after/projects/rivers/>.
- **Shuttles** service for 2013 completed with over 7,500 passenger journeys made between May and September, including new Castle Connect service from Ludlow. 2014 services planned and commissioned (Long Mynd – Stiperstones and Castle Connect).
- **Discover Local** project completed June 2013. New 'product profiles' available on website, illustrating products that rely on specific habitat conservation, see <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/looking-after/projects/discover-local/>.
- New SDF funded **Buy Local** project. Business and public events under way and renewals or new members recruited to **Shropshire Hills Sustainable Business Scheme**.
- **Walking with Offa local delivery** 6 additional self-guided walk leaflets published. Events held for co-operation project. 6 guided walks enjoyed by over 60 people. See <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/things-to-do/walking-with-offa/> and <http://www.shropshirewalking.co.uk/walking-with-offa/>
- **Walking with Offa co-operation project** Offa Hoppa bus promotion, seasonal marketing campaigns, new 'Irresistible Offa' map, and 'Talking Walking' Conference well attended. Walking with Offa Conference being held 9 April in Craven Arms. <https://www.facebook.com/WalkingWithOffa>
- **Walking for Wellbeing** Project completed June 2013. Committee and joint brochure in place for Shropshire Hills Walkers Are Welcome towns.
- **Promotion activity.** 28 press releases issued and continued output on social media. Reduced format Annual Review for 2012-13 published. Joint Shropshire Hills 2013 Events programme and visitor guide well distributed, and 2014 guide prepared. Website updated. AONB display at a number of events including HF walking holidays AGM in Shrewsbury, Ludlow Green Fair and Newcastle Show.
- **Proposed Clee Hill Heritage Project.** Substantial progress with project planning, involving a wide range of stakeholders. Well attended public event held, and HLF visit mid-November. Stage 1 application to be submitted in March. See item 7 and <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/looking-after/projects/clee-hill-heritage-project/>
- **Advice and support** to a wide range of activities and projects, including Clee Hill Community Wildlife Group, Shropshire Outdoor Learning Organisations, Caring for God's Acre Veteran Yew Tree Initiative, Bettws History Group, Western Power undergrounding programme and Youthful Landscapes project.

Develop policy and strategy for the area through the AONB Management Plan, and influence the policies and strategies of others.

- New **AONB Management Plan 2014-19** approved by both local authorities March 2014, following endorsement by the AONB Partnership and formal observations by Natural England.
- **Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan** Close involvement with Shropshire Hills and Ludlow Destination Development Partnership. Licensing of new destination logo and improvements to consistency of text in websites and literature. Mid-term review of Strategy in progress. <http://www.shropshirehillstourismpartnership.org.uk/>
- Input to local authority and other **steering groups** (Local Nature Partnership Board, Biodiversity Partnership, and others). Represent West Midlands LAGs on national LEADER Exchange Group. Engagement with Local Enterprise Partnership and input into EU funding Strategy and LEP Strategic Economic Plan.
- **Planning.** Submissions on Site Allocations & Management of Development (SAMDev) Revised Preferred Options for Church Stretton, and 16 planning applications (see <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/looking-after/planning/planning-consultations/>).

Develop the AONB Partnership as an inclusive and effective organisation.

- Input to **National Association for AONBs**, through annual Conference and AGM, and 'Future Landscapes' development and collaboration programme. <http://www.landscapesforlife.org.uk/>
- Further development work on **new Charitable body** linked to AONB Partnership, including Development Group and specialist advice contract. Following the advice received, the Management Board have agreed to take more time to consider options before going ahead with an application to the Charities Commission.
- Additions made to **financial reserves** from unattached income within 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Support the involvement of the community in the management of the AONB (also a cross-cutting theme in some items above).

- Support and advice for a wide range of **community projects**.
- **Talks** to Parish Councils, schools and other interest groups.
- New programme of **volunteer-led guided walks**, with new system established and six volunteers recruited to date.
- John Muir Award programme with **schools** (education/activity programme themed on wild places), currently working with Norbury and Bishop's Castle primary schools.
- **Friends of the Shropshire Hills AONB** currently has 93 members (with some renewals pending). Friends social event to Bedstone College June '13 well attended.

A summary of the team's 2014-15 work programme is given as Appendix 1. The structure of the AONB Partnership staff team from 1 April 2014 is given as Appendix 2.

BUDGET UPDATE

Appendix 3 gives a simplified budget table, principally to show the AONB Partnership budget for 2014-15. The projected outturn budget for 2013-14 is also shown for comparison (note that the Farming Project, Walking for Wellbeing and Discover Local

projects finished earlier in 2013-14 and these are not shown, though the Core/Defra total and Grand Totals for 2013-14 includes the subtotals from these projects, in order to show the comparable full total amounts).

The outline budget for 2015-16 is also shown.

- a. The budgets have been reorganised to bring more elements within the Defra AONB funding 'core', enabling greater flexibility of allocation.
- b. Main core staffing costs are budgeted to rise in 2014-15 due to the creation of the new Natural Environment Officer post. This is however due to a transfer of staff costs formerly met under the Rivers subhead, and so with redundancy of the Planning & Landscape Officer post there is still a net saving on staffing going into 2014-15.
- c. Office costs are the main area where inflationary pressures have an effect, and these are budgeted to continue to rise slightly. The effects of possible relocation or lease renewal are not factored in at present as these are unknown.
- d. The Defra AONB contribution goes down by almost £15,000 into 2014-15 as part of Spending Review cuts, but is then to remain at the same level for 2015-16, subject to any further decisions.
- e. The earned income requirements into core (top right block) for 2014-15 currently exceed known sources of income, and new sources of income will need to be secured and/or further savings made.
- f. LEADER delivery budgets will add to the overall level of activity in future years, assuming this goes ahead. Further activity is also likely on Rivers, and with the Clee Hill Heritage Project.

<p>List of Background Papers</p> <p>Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan.</p> <p>The full 2013-14 Team work programme can be made available to members on request.</p>
<p>Human Rights Act Appraisal</p> <p>The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.</p>
<p>Environmental Appraisal</p> <p>The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.</p>
<p>Risk Management Appraisal</p> <p>Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.</p>
<p>Community / Consultations Appraisal</p> <p>The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.</p>
<p>Appendices</p> <p>Appendix 1 Shropshire Hills AONB Team Work Programme Summary 2014-15</p> <p>Appendix 2 Shropshire Hills AONB Team structure from 1 April 2014</p> <p>Appendix 3 Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership budget update</p>

Appendix 1 to item 3 Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Team Work Programme 2014 -15 Summary

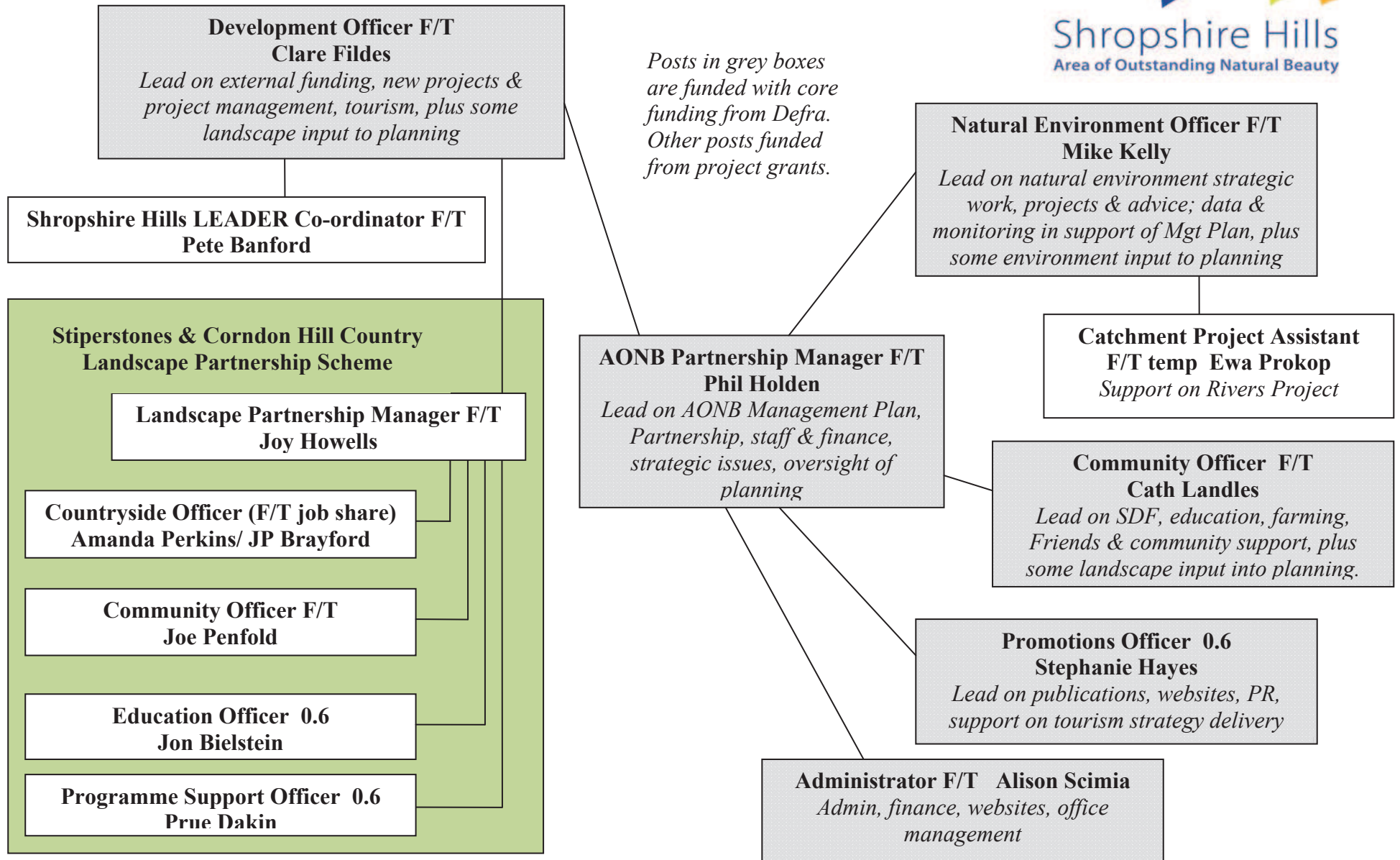
Key areas of work	Key actions and targets
Take and co-ordinate action to conserve and enhance natural beauty; promote wellbeing, enjoyment and understanding, and further sustainable development.	
LEADER in the Shropshire Hills	Develop and submit new Local Development Strategy for LEADER 2015-2020, with partner involvement and consultation, by 5 Sept 2014. Decide on local delivery structure for LEADER 2015-2020 and prepare for delivery.
Sustainable Development Fund	Give grants and support projects with available funding.
Stiperstones & Corndon Landscape Partnership Scheme	Deliver agreed outputs for year 2 of scheme.
Rivers Project	Complete remaining practical work for 3 rd (final) year of SITA funded project. Deliver outputs for Natural England funding agreement (not confirmed). Develop new externally funded projects, as decided. Continue Clun Catchment Partnership and public engagement.
'Buy Local'	Increase membership of businesses in Sustainable Business Scheme by 20, deliver SBS Awards event and business networking. Maintain and promote www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk/ directory.
Sustainable Tourism Strategy	Continue to implement Sustainable Tourism Strategy with Shropshire Hills & Ludlow Destination Development Partnership. Complete mid-term review.
Shropshire Hills Shuttles	Manage 2014 Long Mynd – Stiperstones and Castle Connect Shuttles bus services, and plan for 2015.
Promotion	Continue to update websites and social media. Publish 15 press releases, 3 E-newsletters, Annual Review and joint Events guide. Give 12 talks.
Walking with Offa	With partners, develop follow-up activity to LEADER co-operation project. Continue to distribute walks leaflets/booklet and promotional merchandise.
Clee Hill Heritage Project	Commence HLF funded development phase (subject to agreement of partners and approval of Stage 1 bid).
Support initiatives led by others	Support at least 15 conservation/ economic / recreation/ promotion projects. Respond to requests for information.
Project development	Develop project proposals for EU funding programme, including tourism delivery. Continue to develop successor to Farming Project with partners.
Develop policy and strategy for the area through the AONB Management Plan, and influence the policies and strategies of others.	
Management Plan	Publish and distribute the approved AONB Management Plan 2014-19. Establish delivery priorities and mechanisms for the team and with key partners.
Planning	Develop new mechanisms for input to planning by a range of team members, and comment on relevant LDF documents and planning applications. Maintain close links with local authority planning staff and members.
Other strategies & schemes	Provide input to at least 4 strategic consultations (non-planning). Comment on non-planning casework such as agri-environment schemes.
Local authorities and Partnerships	Establish and maintain links with relevant departments of each local authority. Input to Local Nature Partnership and Marches Local Enterprise Partnership.
Monitoring	Gather and interpret data as part of Management Plan monitoring framework.
Guidance & strategy	Develop guidance page(s) on AONB website. Progress development of AONB specific planning guidance. Input to development of Council Supplementary Planning Documents.
Develop the AONB Partnership as an inclusive and effective organisation.	
AONB Partnership and sub-groups	Hold 20 meetings of 10 groups in the AONB Partnership structure.
Local partnership working	Operate and support local partnership structures including Wrekin Forest, Clee Hill, Clun Catchment, Stiperstones & Corndon Landscape Partnership Board.
AONB Team	Hold monthly team meetings, complete performance reviews and training.
Business Planning	Continue to diversify sources of income.
Wider networks	Continue involvement with NAAONB, LEADER and other relevant networks.
Support the involvement of the community in the management of the AONB (cross-cutting above).	
Friends	Develop Friends of the Shropshire Hills AONB, and increase membership.
Support for groups	Support 30 community groups in total (includes SDF, LEADER, etc above).
Schools	4 schools involved with AONB-led activity.
Volunteering	Involve 300 volunteers through AONB-led and supported activities.

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Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership staff team at 1 April 2014



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Appendix 3 to item 3 Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Budget Update

Expenditure	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Income	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
	Projected outturn	Budget	outline budget		Projected outturn	Budget	outline budget
ACTIVITY FUNDED BY DEFRA AONB GRANT							
MAIN CORE COSTS & INCOME							
Main core staff costs (inclusive of NI, pension, training, T&S)	£178,626	£195,426	£195,379	Defra AONB Single Pot	£168,922	£183,264	£183,264
Office costs	£33,773	£36,700	£36,700	Shropshire Council	£40,830	£40,830	£40,830
Promotional Activity	£5,885	£5,490	£3,450	Telford & Wrekin Council	£2,694	£2,694	£2,694
Management Plan	£500	£2,000	£0	Earned income covering councils' core shortfall	£11,229	£17,719	£13,632
Meeting and Partnership costs	£4,891	£4,891	£4,891				
Subtotal	£223,675	£244,507	£240,420		£223,675	£244,507	£240,420
RIVERS							
Staff costs (inclusive of NI, pension, training, T&S)	£61,856	£14,406		Defra AONB Single Pot	£26,218		
Site works	£74,752	£6,056		SITA Trust	£32,776	£10,254	
Office costs and management	£167			Natural England (additional Catchment funding)	£90,000		
Feasibility work contracted out	£5,000			Natural England carried forward	-£7,219	£10,208	
Subtotal	£141,775	£20,462			£141,775	£20,462	
SHUTTLES							
Operating costs	£23,732	£21,840	£22,000	Ticket Income	£4,640	£5,000	£5,000
Wenlock Wanderer	£12,195		£0	Local Sustainable Transport Fund	£37,743	£32,097	
Ludlow service	£13,160	£14,560	£15,000	Church Stretton Area Tourism Group	£500	£500	£500
Extra promotion	£300	£1,400	£1,000	Concessionary fare compensation	£8,500	£8,500	£8,500
Leaflets	£2,340	£2,340	£2,500	Shropshire Council contribution	£7,500	£7,500	£7,500
Advertising	£59	£60	£60	National Trust	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
				Natural England	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
				Carried forward	-£17,097	-£23,397	£9,060
Subtotal	£51,786	£40,200	£40,560		£51,786	£40,200	£40,560
BUY LOCAL							
Events	£620	£1,150		Sustainable Development Fund	£115	£1,265	
Marketing	£520	£150		Membership fees	£925	£700	
Membership renewals		£875		Income from events	£100	£210	
Subtotal	£1,140	£2,175			£1,140	£2,175	
CORE/DEFRA TOTAL	* £468,026	£307,344	£280,980	CORE/ DEFRA TOTAL	£468,026	£307,344	£280,980
				Total Defra AONB contribution	£198,209	£183,264	£183,264

* = includes subtotals not shown for projects which closed earlier in 2013-14

Expenditure	2013-14 Projected outturn	2014-15 Budget	2015-16 <i>outline budget</i>	Income	2013-14 Projected outturn	2014-15 Budget	2015-16 <i>outline budget</i>
ACTIVITY NOT FUNDED BY DEFRA AONB GRANT							
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND				SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND			
Grants	£29,402	£25,000	£25,000	Millichope Foundation	£6,402	£5,000	£5,000
				Friends of Shropshire Hills	£8,000	£5,000	£5,000
				Jean Jackson Charitable Trust	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000
TOTAL	£29,402	£25,000	£25,000		£29,402	£25,000	£25,000
LEADER				LEADER			
Transition activity (LEADER Co-ordinator + costs)	£9,753	£29,258		Defra LEADER Transition funding	£9,753	£29,258	
Total	* £82,700	£29,258			£82,700	£29,258	
* = includes LEADER delivery in current programme not shown							
STIPERSTONES & CORNDON HILL COUNTRY LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME				STIPERSTONES & CORNDON HILL COUNTRY LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME			
Conserving and restoring	£166,298	£142,498	£184,261	Heritage Lottery Fund	£224,814	£256,644	£360,491
Increasing community participation	£14,019	£28,188	£24,133	Jean Jackson Trust	£9,250	£10,000	£10,000
Access and learning	£22,099	£87,799	£115,685	English Heritage - Management Plans	£28,367	£27,756	£16,623
Training and skills	£32,822	£34,979	£32,700	Natural England - Agri Environment schemes	£30,000	£75,300	£34,700
Overheads including staff	£147,203	£175,363	£151,914	Powys County Council	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Contingency	£11,219	£32,017	£53,796	Shropshire Wildlife Trust	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
				Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
				Countryside Council for Wales	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000
				WREN	£69,831	£48,041	£48,088
				Arts Council (unconfirmed)	£0	£15,000	£20,960
				Private contributions	£3,000	£10,185	£7,960
				Volunteer	£3,333	£27,917	£33,667
Total	£397,977	£500,844	£562,489		£397,977	£500,843	£562,489
GRAND TOTAL	* £978,105	£862,445	£868,469	GRAND TOTAL	£978,105	£862,445	£868,469



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LEADER 2015-2020

Responsible Officer Pete Banford, LEADER Co-ordinator
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Summary

This paper makes a recommendation for the AONB Partnership to make the decision to bid to be the LEADER Local Action Group for the Shropshire Hills for the 2015-20 round of funding.

Background

As outlined in previous papers, the AONB Partnership has secured a year of Transition funding for Jan – Dec 2014, enabling extension of the LEADER Co-ordinator post. The activities required in the transition year are to review performance of the 2009-13 programme, and principally to set out a new Local Development Strategy (LDS), to be submitted by August 2014.

The Shropshire Hills LEADER Development Group has had several meetings to discuss the future round of LEADER funding, and an additional AONB Partnership meeting was held on 13 Feb 2014 (see notes at Appendix 1). This took the form of a workshop on the opportunities for the Shropshire Hills from the national priorities set out by Defra for LEADER 2015-2020:

- Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification
- Support for increasing farm productivity
- Support for rural tourism
- Support for increasing forestry productivity
- Provision for rural services
- Support for cultural and heritage activity

These priorities offer great potential for delivery of AONB purposes. The Partnership has however needed to explore the risks and the potential for conflicts between the new LEADER priorities and the primary purpose of the AONB, which could cause difficulties for the Partnership also acting as the Local Action Group. In the worst case scenario this could perhaps involve the Partnership being obliged to support a grant under LEADER criteria for an activity which it would not support in relation to AONB purposes.

It appears that such conflicts may be avoided by the creation of a Local Development Strategy which sets as its over-riding theme the delivery of the economic outputs required, drawing on the high quality landscape of the Shropshire Hills while not harming it. If such a Local Development Strategy were to be approved by Defra (and endorsed by the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership as required), the potential for conflicts of purpose will be much reduced. If however the Partnership is steered hard to adapt the LDS to encompass economic activities which may be less compatible with the AONB, a 'line in the sand' might be reached which might require the Partnership to reconsider its role as a LAG.

The structures which are put in place for delivery of LEADER by the Partnership may also help to reduce any potential conflicts between LEADER and AONB purposes. These structures need further consideration, and firm recommendations are not made at this point regarding this. However, it appears that the scenario of the AONB Partnership itself remaining as officially the LAG, supported by other groups specifically for LEADER (e.g. Approval and Appraisal Panels), may have advantages compared to for example if a sub-group of the AONB Partnership were act as the LAG, and may take a more divergent path from AONB purposes. The role of the Approvals Panel and its membership in terms of avoiding conflict with AONB purposes also needs careful consideration.

In coming to a decision about acting as the LAG again, it appears that all risks cannot be eliminated at this stage, but that the potential benefits to the AONB Partnership of being the LEADER delivery body can outweigh the risks, if the programme is designed with this in mind. It is also likely that if the AONB Partnership did not act as LAG, either the Shropshire Hills would miss out on LEADER funding or perhaps another body may deliver LEADER in ways less compatible with the AONB. These alternatives are also background to the current recommendation to go ahead.

Geographical area. The AONB Partnership has previously expressed its preference to continue running LEADER in the same area as the 2009-13 round. Defra has indicated a desire to see rural areas not previously covered by LEADER included in the new round, but there is a recognition that the amount of money available may not make this practical. It appears therefore that we are in a strong position to put forward our LDS for the same Shropshire Hills area, which will help in terms of connection to the AONB, and to the Destination Development Partnership structure for tourism, which also uses the LEADER area. An exception to this may be Ludlow, which it looks likely will not fall within new definitions of 'rural' (population threshold 10,000), and may have to be excluded from the LEADER area, or perhaps be classified as a 'hub town' which may be included in LEADER activity but not count towards the population of our LEADER area.

Process and timetable for production of Local Development Strategy

The writing of the new Local Development Strategy will be led by members of the AONB Partnership staff team over the coming months, supported by a programme of involvement and consultation with Partnership/LAG members and the wider community (see Appendix 2). The LEADER Development Group will also play a valuable role to advise, but any significant decisions will come back to the Partnership as LAG. Additional members of the Partnership wishing to join the LEADER Development Group will be welcome to do so.

National Update

The general implications of the CAP Reform decisions for LEADER are as follows:

- Budget now set for next programme period (2014-2020).
- 12% transfer agreed from Pillar 1 (Direct payments) to Pillar 2 (RDP)
- Potential to increase transfer to 15% for final 3 years of the programme.
- Pillar 2 budget £3.5bn over the next 7 years (Previously £3.8bn)
- 87% of Pillar 2 budget for Environmental schemes. 13% (£460m) Social & Economic.
- The 13% Social & Economic elements equate to approximately –
 - £177m Growth Programme via LEPs
 - £140m Farming & Forestry Productivity
 - £140m LEADER

LEADER 2009 -2013 programme

The 5% target of £133.2m of RDPE expenditure through the LEADER approach has been met. Spend for the 64 English LAGs as of 20/02/2014 totals £133.5m, with a further £1.7m of project and £1.6m of Management and Admin to claim by March 2014.

The European Commission auditors will be in England in June 2014. It is not clear what the auditors will want to look at. Two to three weeks' notice will be given should they wish to audit the Shropshire Hills LAG.

4. Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to:

- i. support the development and submission of a new LEADER Local Development Strategy for 2015-2020, as far as possible to the same geographical area as the previous LEADER round, linking economic outputs strongly to the qualities of the AONB, and with the AONB Partnership as the Local Action Group (with detailed structures to be decided in due course).
- ii. approve the role of the LEADER Development Group to support development of the LDS, with any significant decisions coming back to the Partnership.

List of Background Papers None
Human Rights Act Appraisal The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.
Environmental Appraisal The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.
Risk Management Appraisal Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.
Community / Consultations Appraisal The topics raised follow on from earlier discussions with Partnership members.
Appendices Appendix 1 Notes of AONB Partnership workshop on 13 February 2014 Appendix 2 New Local Development Strategy development timetable

Notes from Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership LEADER Workshop Thursday 13 February 2014 Carding Mill Valley

Present:

Pete Banford	Shropshire Hills LEADER Coordinator
Clare Fildes	Shropshire Hill AONB Partnership Development Officer
Phil Holden	Shropshire Hill AONB Partnership Manager
Mike Kelly	Shropshire Hill AONB Partnership River Valleys Officer
Andrew Tyley	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member
Mike Morris	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member
Lisa Bedford	Shropshire Council Community Action
Fiona Pidduck	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member
James Williamson	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member
Ron Repath	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member
Veronica Cossons	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member
Ian Dormor	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member
Sue Jones	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member
Jo Jury	DEFRA
Joe Bubb	Shropshire Council External Funding Team
George Chancellor	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member (Chair)
Alison Caffyn	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member (Vice Chair)
Peter Carty	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member
Gill Binks	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Member

1. LEADER 2015 – 2020

Pete Banford gave an update on what is known about the next programme:

(N.B. The information below has not yet be signed off by Ministers)

- £140m budget
- Budget to be more evenly allocated across LAGs
- Challenge to increase geographical coverage but not expecting 100%
- The programme will focus on jobs and growth
- 70% direct to businesses, 30% contributing to growth through other means
- Six policy areas and related Measures
- Open and competitive process
- All groups in place by 1st Jan 2015
- Local Development Strategy needs to be endorsed by the Marches LEP.

The national framework and LDS application process will be available no later than 31st March 2014.

2. PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PROGRAMME

Jo Jury talked through the six priorities for investment through LEADER 2015 – 2020:

• Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification

Direct grants to businesses. It is envisaged that a £20,000 maximum grant will be placed on this priority. The micro and small enterprise element can be from any business background and not just from the farming sector e.g. digital media, light industry etc.

• Support for increasing farm productivity

Intervention rate 40 – 50 % with private sector match. This priority is focused on the improvement of productivity of farm holdings.

- **Support for rural tourism**

This priority can support businesses and organisations with an interest in tourism.

- **Support for increasing forestry productivity**
- **Provision for rural services**
- **Support for cultural and heritage activity**

3. POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS

Small groups were formed to explore each of the priorities from a Shropshire Hills perspective and to begin the process of understanding the current position.

Current characteristics of the area:

- High quality landscape
- Few job opportunities – especially for graduates
- Low wages
- High levels of self-employment
- Care and tourism sectors predominate
- Home based businesses
- Creative industries
- Festivals and events
- High proportion of experienced retired people
- Food processing and supply chains – artisans
- Forestry is primarily small woodland
- Poor broadband services

Existing support for partners:

- Shropshire Council Business support and External Funding Team
- Shropshire Chamber of Commerce
- Forestry Commission & Forestry Enterprise Zone
- Shropshire Hills & Ludlow Destination Development Partnership
- Rural Hubs
- Catchment Sensitive Farming
- New Environmental Land Management Scheme (NELMS)
- Voluntary sector
- Harper Adams University College
- Land Life and Livelihoods

- **Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification**

Ideas: B & B, microbreweries, art and crafts, local food, alternative accommodation, pub diversification, music, pets and horses mobile services, shops and retail, water resources protection, digital media, farm engineering service, business support services, environmental technology, small woodland management, cafes, farm shops, IT services, Post Office, camp sites, glamping, direct farm sales, yogurt making, ice cream making, cider production, Shropshire prune.

- **Support for increasing farm productivity**

Ideas: Mobile sheep handling unit, Soil conservation, resource protection technology e.g. solar pumps for drinking troughs, farm tracks for access to woodland for fuel, animal health and welfare, water storage, plant and machinery cooperative, pollinators, building upgrades, ecosystem services.

- **Support for rural tourism**

Ideas: Accommodation upgrade, old rail network for cycling, bridleways and walking routes, angling, improve walking routes, web based promotion, interpretation panels, cafes, bird watching, farm stays, Worldwide opportunities on organic farms (woofing), Delivery of Sustainable Tourism Strategy, equestrian tourism, bunk houses, heritage tourism, transport e.g. Shuttle buses, transport links to train stations, festivals.

- **Support for increasing forestry productivity**

Ideas: Small farm woodland, community woodfuel projects, added value to timber product e.g. planking, furniture, building materials, purchase of plant and machinery, improve access to woodlands / forestry sites, woodfuel supply chains, local timber products e.g. play areas.

- **Provision for rural services**

Ideas: Pub diversification e.g. post office and or shop, Community shops, rural transport, village hall home working hubs, childcare provision, community food, growing supply chains, IT support services – particularly for the farming community, community energy schemes, wheels to work style project.

- **Support for cultural and heritage activity**

Ideas: Restoration of heritage sites, interpretation, rural skills development, smallholding advice and sympathetic land management, research, heritage and cultural tourism promotion, educational packages.

Shropshire Hills LEADER Local Development Strategy 2015 – 2020 development

Key Actions	Target Date for completion of task	Success Indicator
Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership LEADER 2015 – 2020 workshop	13 th February 2014	Notes of meeting
Paper presented to Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership recommending that the Partnership support the development and submission of a new LEADER Local Development Strategy for 2015-2020, as far as possible to the same geographical area as the previous LEADER round, linking economic outputs strongly to the qualities of the AONB, and with the AONB Partnership as the Local Action Group.	18 th March 2014	Recommendation approved by Partnership - Minutes
Desk based analysis and creation of Stakeholder Analysis	30 th May 2014	Stakeholder Analysis Statistical Evidence to support LDS
4x LEADER 2015 – 2020 community engagement/ consultation workshops. Consultation events to be held in the North, South, East and West of the LEADER area.	14 th May 2014	Agendas, reports, attendance sheets, photographs etc.
Submit proposed Shropshire Hills LEADER boundary to Defra. Defra to allocate indicative budgets.	23 rd May 2014	Indicative budget received.
2x LAG visits to LEADER areas where economic and or employment creation outputs occurred in the 2008 - 2013 programme.	30 th June 2014	Reports and feedback presentations
Draft edition of LDS presented to LEADER Development Group	30 th June 2014	LEADER Development Group Minutes
LDS presented to Marches Local Enterprise Partnership for approval	11 th July 2014	LEP response
Shropshire Hills LDS 2015 – 2020 presented to Shropshire Hills AONB partnership for approval.	31 st July 2014	LDS approved by Partnership – Minutes
LDS submitted to DEFRA for approval	5 Sept 2014	
Shropshire Hill LDS 2015 – 2020 approved	Nov – Dec 2014	Funding contract

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PROPOSED CLEE HILL HERITAGE PROJECT

Responsible Officer Clare Fildes, Development Officer
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Summary

This paper gives a summary of the proposed Clee Hill Heritage Project.

Background

In 2011 the Clee Hill Partnership was formed to bring together a wide range of community organisations and interests with public sector bodies. The remit of the Partnership is as follows (from the Terms of Reference): *"The Clee Hill Partnership aims to bring together relevant partners to work together for the sustainable natural, cultural and economic future of the Clee Hill area in the county of Shropshire."*

A smaller group is focusing on the development of a new heritage project for the area. Project development has been overseen by the Clee Hill Partnership but the lead partner for management and delivery will be the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership. A new member of staff will be employed to develop this work if the Stage 1 bid is successful.

Aim and objectives

The aim of the project is to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of Titterstone Clee and surrounding area for the benefit of local people, visitors and the local economy. Benefits should include:

- Better conservation of the local heritage for future generations
- Better understanding of the importance of the commons and their management
- More people aware of how special the hill is
- More activity for young people
- More people actively involved in looking after the hill
- More income to the area from visitors
- A more joined-up approach and better communication

Project activity

The project will aim to encompass a range of activity focused on improving the conservation of key natural and cultural heritage in the Clee Hill area. Ideas so far include:

Conservation:

- **Cultural Heritage:**
 - Titterstone Clee Old Quarry - stabilise deteriorating ferro-concrete and other buildings, safeguard unprotected features on quarry floor, manage vehicle access and erosion issues
 - Scrub/vegetation control on monuments on the commons
 - Bitterley incline and yard

- Benson's Brook Hydro Scheme - management of woodland, access and consolidation of built remains
- **Natural Heritage:**
 - Commons management - Sharing expertise in commons management and farming techniques and traditional skills including grazing, scrub management and traditional breeds.
 - Local Wildlife Sites - management advice and owners club

Community Participation:

- Activity and learning for young people – Green Team, Young Rangers and John Muir awards
- Community Wildlife Group - wildlife surveying and monitoring
- Clee Hill Commoners Association- sharing understanding of commons management, oral history of the common
- Clee Hill Wardens - support and training
- Archaeology group - research of archaeology and cultural heritage
- Events programme
- Woodland and scrub management
- Reducing vandalism, litter and dumping

Access and interpretation:

- Improved access to cultural and natural heritage features
- Visitor information and interpretation
- Improved interpretation in a range of businesses.

An application will be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to finance a project, with a project application for WREN funding for match funding being developed in the delivery phase.

Area covered

The project will include Titterstone Clee and the surrounding common, Bitterley incline, yard and Benson's Brook, smallholdings that reflect the quarrying history and local communities from across the area.

Timescales

The Project Development Group will aim to submit an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund by 17th March 2014. If successful, Stage 1 funding will enable the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership to employ a full time project development officer for 15 months dedicated to drawing together a detailed Stage 2 application and carrying out considerable community consultation. The Stage 2 funding would then be used to deliver project activity over the following three years (2016- 2019).

Budget

The budget is just over £1.0m.

Draft bid

The draft bid can be found on the Shropshire Hills AONB website:

<http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/looking-after/projects/clee-hill-heritage-project/>

Any comments on this will need to be submitted to Clare Fildes **before 14th March**, as the Stage 1 bid must be submitted to HLF on 17th March.

4. Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to note the proposals and the opportunity to input comments to the further development phase if the stage 1 bid is successful.

List of Background Papers http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/looking-after/projects/clee-hill-heritage-project/
Human Rights Act Appraisal The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.
Environmental Appraisal The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.
Risk Management Appraisal Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.
Community / Consultations Appraisal The topics raised follow on from earlier discussions with Partnership members.
Appendices none

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