

## AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

### *Purpose*

To advise of on-going progress with the AONB Management Plan review.

FOR INFORMATION

### *Key Issues*

- A total of 24 organisations and individuals submitted comments on the Consultation Draft AONB Management Plan 2020-25, amounting to approximately 200 specific comments.
- The assimilation of the consultation responses into the final draft of the AONB Management Plan is underway.
- A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment for the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of the Plan is now underway which needs to be completed before the Plan can be formally adopted by the local authorities and government agencies.
- It is intended that the finalised version of the AONB Management Plan 2020-2025 will be presented for adoption at the next JAC meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

### *Reasons*

The public consultation period for the AONB Management Plan 2020-2025 was due to close on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020 but a 2 week extension was granted on the request of some key stakeholders. Submissions on the Draft Plan were received from 24 organisations and individuals with approximately 200 specific comments made. These are being considered and work is progressing with finalising the Post Consultation Management Plan.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) are also being progressed. The purpose of the SEA Directive is to ensure that plans and programmes that are likely to have significant effects on the environment are subjected to a strategic level (high and overarching) assessment during their preparation, to inform decision-makers and stakeholders of their likely effects. The SEA covers options and alternative courses of action and is intended to help avoid or mitigate any adverse effects. Similarly the requirement for a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is outlined in Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and relates to the effects of the Plan on the internationally important habitats (Natura 2000 sites) and protected species for which the area is classified.

A Future Generations Evaluation was also concluded for Monmouthshire County Council. It is intended that a finalised version of the AONB Management Plan will be prepared for adoption in time for the July JAC.

### ***Implications***

The final draft of the AONB Management Plan is underway with the assimilation of the consultation responses from the 24 submissions and the Future Generations Evaluation. Two public drop-in sessions were held as part of the consultation process, at Brockweir and Ross-on-Wye, with 15 members of the public attending.

The SEA and HRA are underway but it is not anticipated that they will significantly alter the Management Plan as the Plan review and drafting has taken full account of the strategic and environmental impacts throughout. A report on the implications of the SEA and any subsequent modifications will be presented to the next JAC meeting along with the finalised version of the AONB Management Plan.

### ***Background***

The CRoW Act 2000 (Sections 89 and 90) require local authorities to act jointly and publish an AONB Management Plan for their AONB, at not more than five year intervals, which formulates their policy for the management of their AONB and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it.