

## ANNUAL REPORT

### ***Purpose***

To present the annual reports for 2021/22 on the achievements of the Wye Valley AONB Unit.

### ***Recommendations***

That the JAC welcome the Annual Report of AONB achievements for 2021/22

### ***Key Issues***

- The 2021/22 Annual Report on the Work Programme for the AONB Unit is appended, along with the summary financial report, presented at the previous JAC meeting.
- High levels of achievement were maintained by the AONB Unit despite the challenges of the on-going Coronavirus Pandemic restricting many activities and some reduced capacity due to staffing issues.
- The AONB Unit has levered in over £16 for every £1 of local authority contribution during 2020/21.

### ***Reasons***

The Annual Work Programme Report for the AONB Unit is usually presented to the July JAC. However the full Report was delayed due to work pressures and staff shortages. Only the financial summary was presented to the JAC in July. The impacts of Covid-19 have continued to affected many aspects of life over the past year.

### ***Implications***

The AONB Unit Work Programme Plan was risk assessed in relation to Covid-19 restrictions and reviewed by the AONB Technical Officers' Working Party (TOWP). The majority of works continued with AONB staff 'Working from Home'. When the AONB Office decarbonisation and refurbishment was completed staff were able to return to working from the office where and when necessary. However extensive use of Microsoft Teams continued including for all JAC Meetings. Site works and commissioning contractors on the ground was easier when Covid lockdowns and restrictions lifted. However staff capacity was reduced due to the on-going delays in recruiting the FiPL Officer and then the departure of the Community Links Officer.

The overall turnover of the AONB Unit increased in 2021/22, mostly accounted for by the income and expenditure of the DEFRA Farming in Protected Landscape programme and the Welsh Government Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places (SLSP) funding. The leverage of the AONB Partnership in 2021/22 means that for every £1 of local authority contribution, the AONB Unit brought in over £16.