

TECHNICAL OFFICERS'
WORKING PARTY REPORT

WYE VALLEY AONB
JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
7th March 2016

AONB UNIT WORK PROGRAMME 2016/2017

Purpose

To seek members' approval for the proposed business plan for the AONB Unit during the forthcoming financial year.

Recommendations

That the JAC endorses the AONB Unit Work Programme 2016/2017.

Key Issues

- The attached table sets out the proposed business plan for the AONB Unit in the form of the Work Programme 2016/2017.
- This is focused on progressing the new AONB Management Plan, successful delivery of the Wye Valley River Festival 2016 and continuing existing activities while developing new initiatives and funding opportunities.
- In the Government's Autumn Statement, George Osborne announced that "Funding for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will [also] be protected". Defra subsequently made a four year grant offer to all AONBs in England.
- The budgets in the Work Programme have been approved by Defra, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and AONB Steering Group.

Reasons

The main tasks in the year ahead are:

- Promoting and distributing the adopted AONB Management Plan and the accompanying Action Plan.
- maintaining a high profile for the AONB, delivering the Wye Valley River Festival 2016, alongside continuing activities such as the AONB Farming Awards, Youth Rangers and mindSCAPES
- delivering ongoing partnership initiatives, such as the Wye Valley Walk Partnership and the legacy of the Overlooking the Wye scheme
- developing and submitting new projects, partnership initiatives and funding bids for the future delivery of the AONB Management Plan Action Plan including landscape scale partnership projects and the next phase of 'Irresistible Offa / Walking with Offa'

Implications

Defra have provided a new four year grant allocation (2016-2020) while 2016/17 will be the second year of a three year grant from NRW. Overall the AONB Unit business plan, based on the Work Programme, maximises the benefit for the local communities, the local economy and the outstanding landscape, while making best use of resources available. This is achieved by collaboration and leveraging in additional funding and resources wherever possible.