

## **Progress Report on Review of the AONB Management Plan**

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**Summary** Steady progress is being maintained and although the review is slightly behind schedule the revised plan should be published by next October. It is proposed to set up two sub groups of the Board to oversee the final review of policy.

**Purpose of Report:** To advise the Committee of progress.

### **Background**

1. The Review of the AONB Management is now subject to EU legislation which requires the plan itself to be assessed for its environmental impacts. This requires the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Scoping Report for that assessment has been prepared and has been issued for public consultation. The closing date for comments is 21<sup>st</sup> January (A copy will be sent to Committee members prior to the meeting).
2. The SEA itself does not contain policies or actions, but provides a base against which the reviewed policies and actions in the Management Plan will be assessed to determine their impact on the environment. Many of the types of indicator are generic and used in most SEAs.
3. The Board will also be required to undertake what is described as an Appropriate Assessment. This is an assessment of the impact of proposals in the revised Management Plan on the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) Map1
4. The process of reviewing the changed context (e.g. land use changes), policy review and identification of strategic activity on which the delivery plan will be based has begun. Useful sessions were held at the last Board meeting and Annual Forum. All task groups have reviewed relevant chapters. The aim is to prepare revised draft chapters with policies for approval at the Board meeting in March. It will be issued from April until July for public comment.
5. It is proposed to set up two sub groups of the Board to oversee the policy review process. They will meet in late February or early March. The two groups will cover the policies relating to the Board's statutory purposes of Conserving and Enhancing Natural Beauty, and Promoting Understanding and Enjoyment of the area's special qualities.

