

## **Revised Estimates 2017/18 and Revenue Budget 2018/19**

(Appendix A refers)

### **Issue for consideration**

- a) Revised Estimates 2017/18
- b) Revenue Budget 2018/19

### **Background**

The budget provision for the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee is funded by eight constituent local authority partners and grant from Defra, which is also enhanced by additional and contribution from United Utilities.

A core team is established from this budget provision, to assist in the delivery of the statutory AONB Management Plan on behalf of the Joint Advisory Committee and the local authorities. The AONB Unit continues to work to a 3-year business plan (2017 - 2020), on which Partners are consulted to ensure it reflects local priorities for the AONB.

#### **a. Revised Estimates 2016/17**

The costs of the Partnership are managed as part of the Lancashire County Council's 'Devolved Financial Management' scheme. Since Committee approval of the 2017/18 estimates in October 2016 and support for the contributions requested from funding partners, it is understood the full requested contributions will be met.

Defra advised that the grant offer for 2017/18 was £215,364.

The contributions advised by the constituent local authorities for 2017/18 were as follows: -

	£
Craven District Council	6,800
Lancaster City Council	6,800
Pendle Borough Council	6,800
Preston Borough Council	6,800
Ribble Valley Borough Council	6,800
Wyre Borough Council	6,800
Lancashire County Council	40,800
North Yorkshire County Council	5,340

The net effect of any changes allows an AONB projects programme totalling £98,031 to be delivered in 2017/18.

The revised estimates take account of any changes (see Appendix A, Column 3) in comparison with the Original Estimates in Column 2.

The principal revisions relate to an estimated reduction in salary costs due to secondment and V-time reduction in hours for the Development and Funding Officer and maternity cover and V-time reduction in hours for the Sustainable Tourism Officer. These staff cost savings have allowed the AONB Unit to contract support services to temporarily 'backfill' and cover existing AONB Partnership responsibilities:

- Project development and funding support for the AONB Unit

- Countryside access maintenance and improvements due to the loss of support from Lancashire County Council Environment and Community Project Officers

Since last reported in April 2017, the AONB Unit has been successful in obtaining the following additional funding to support delivery of projects within the area:

<b>Project</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Organisation(s)</b>
Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership	50,000	Heritage Lottery Fund
Peatland habitat restoration for Brown Syke South, Tarnbrook	65,000 30,000	Defra/Natural England Environment Agency
Bowland Haytime Project	15,000	Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust
AONB Discovery Guide	4,500	Business adverts taken by local tourism businesses
<b>Total</b>	<b>165,500</b>	

#### **b. Revenue Budget 2018/19**

##### Revenue Budget 2018/19

This section sets out in Appendix 'A' column 4, the costs associated with the Partnership's projects and management service in 2018/19, including estimated pay and price levels.

Provision reflects the core team, operational budgets for core activities and projects:

- Principal AONB Officer (1 FTE)
- Development and Funding Officer (1 FTE)
- Sustainable Tourism and Communications Officer (0.8 FTE)
- Projects Officer (1 FTE)

Total Partnership income from contributions has been included in the budget for 2018/19, based on estimated contributions from funding authorities, equivalent to maintaining the requested contribution for the previous year (£6,800).

In addition, it is also based on a continuation of a contribution from United Utilities, matching the level requested district/borough councils.

Income in respect of grant support from Defra towards core costs and projects costs has been included on the basis of a further inflationary increase on 2017/18 grant offer.

It is also assumed that the Defra grant for 2018/19 will continue to be a single grant offer to be used in ways which the AONB Partnership considers will deliver the best performance in terms of achieving delivery of the Management Plan, without restrictions placed on the percentage of grant to each area of supported activity.

Therefore, the level of provision for 'Projects' is based on the resources estimated to be available to the Partnership after providing for the staffing of the AONB Unit at the existing office base, plus related core activities costs.

The attention of the Committee is drawn to the following:

### **1. Gross Expenditure**

It is proposed that total expenditure be £370,099 in 2018/19. The total expenditure results from providing for the effect of increased pay and prices, staff increments (where applicable), employers national insurance and superannuation contributions, host authority support costs and reflecting a level of provision for 'Projects'.

### **2. Income**

Defra grant for 2017/18 towards core costs and projects costs of £219,069 reflects an inflationary increase on grant offer for 2017/18.

The estimated contributions from funding authorities, equivalent to maintaining the requested contribution for the previous year (£6,800).

A contribution of £6,800 from United Utilities has been included, on the basis that the company will maintain a level of contribution equivalent to that of the district/borough councils.

### **3. Net Expenditure**

The £314,269 net cost of management services is based on maintaining the level of contributions from the funding authorities requested for 2016/17. It is essential that the funding authorities are notified of the planned AONB Partnership expenditure and requested to make due provision in their own estimates.

### **4. Additional Resources**

It should also be noted that, as has become customary, resources from other funding bodies for projects in AONB will be sought during 2017/18 (e.g. Lottery funds, European Union, Government Agencies, Lancashire Environment Fund), which are over and above the Partnership budget provision and this will continue into 2018/19.

Furthermore, the AONB Unit contributes to the generation of additional schemes and projects in liaison with partner organisations operating in the area e.g. local authority countryside services, Rivers Trusts, the Wildlife Trust and others.

### **Decision Required**

The Committee is requested to:

- i) note the 2017/18 Revised Estimates
- ii) approve the 2018/19 Revenue Budget as set out in the report
- iii) subject to the approval of (ii) above, to request the funding authorities to make appropriate provision in their revenue budgets