

Revised Estimates 2018/19 and Revenue Budget 2019/20 (Appendix A refers)

Issue for consideration

- a) Revised Estimates 2018/19
- b) Revenue Budget 2019/20

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 an agreed business plan (2018 - 2021), on which Partners are consulted to ensure it reflects local priorities for the AONB.

a. Revised Estimates 2018/19

The costs of the Partnership are managed as part of the Lancashire County Council's 'Devolved Financial Management' scheme. Since Committee approval of the 2018/19 estimates in October 2018 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 2018/19 was £219,069

The contributions advised by the constituent local authorities for 2018/19 are 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 revised estimates take account of any changes (see Appendix A, Column 3) in comparison with the Original Estimates in Column 2. The principal revision relates to an estimated reduction in salary costs due to the vacancy from April to October 2018 for the Development and Funding Officer.

The net effect of any changes allows an AONB 'Projects' programme totalling £89,870 to be delivered in 2018/19.

Since last reported in April 2018, the AONB Unit has been successful in obtaining the following additional funding to support delivery of projects within the area:

Programme / Project	£	Organisation(s)
Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership	598,631	Heritage Lottery Fund LEADER Lancashire Environmental Fund
Pendle Hill Farmers Network	22,500	Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund
Northern England Peat Project - peatland habitat restoration for Brown Syke South, Mallowdale and Hare Syke	331,000	Defra Peatland Fund
Bowland Haytime Rescue	24,674	Lancashire Environmental Fund and Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (Joint bid with YDMT)
AONB Discovery Guide	4,500	Business adverts taken by local tourism businesses
Total	981,305	

b. Revenue Budget 2018/19

Revenue Budget 2019/20

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)
- Projects Officer (1 FTE)
- Sustainable Tourism Officer (0.9 FTE)
- Countryside Access Officer (0.5FTE)
- Farming and Wildlife Officer (0.4FTE)

Total Partnership income from contributions has been included in the budget for 2019/20, 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 2018/19 grant offer.

It is also assumed that the Defra grant for 2019/20 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 will be £388,232 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 2019/20 towards core costs and projects costs of £222,837 reflects an inflationary increase on grant offer for 2018/19.

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 £316,577 net cost of management services is based on maintaining the level of contributions from the funding authorities requested for 2018/19. 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 external funding bodies for projects in AONB will be sought during 2018/19, which are over and above the Partnership budget provision and this will continue into 2019/20.

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 2018/19 Revised Estimates
- ii) approve the 2019/20 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