

Revised Estimates 2019/20 and Revenue Budget 2020/21

(Appendix A refers)

Issue for consideration

- a) Revised Estimates 2019/20
- b) Revenue Budget 2020/21

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.

a. Revised Estimates 2019/20

The costs of the Partnership are managed as part of the Lancashire County Council's 'Devolved Financial Management' scheme. Since Committee approval of the 2019/20 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 2019/20 was £222,837

The contributions advised by the constituent local authorities for 2019/20 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 maternity leave for the Sustainable Tourism Officer from July 2019.

The net effect of any changes allows an AONB 'Projects' programme totalling £73,210 to be delivered in 2019/20.

In addition, the AONB Unit will be in receipt of the following additional funding to support delivery of projects within the area:

Programme / Project	£	Organisation(s)
Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership	529,684	Heritage Lottery Fund
Pendle Hill Farmers Network	16,702	Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund
NAAONB 'Farming for the Nation' Environmental Land Management System Test	75,500	Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Northern England Peat Project – Hare Syke East and West	160,000	Defra Peatland Fund
Bowland Haytime	20,000	Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (Joint project with YDMT)
AONB Discovery Guide	3,500	Business adverts taken by local tourism businesses in AONB Discovery Guide
Total	805,386	

b. Revenue Budget 2020/21

This section sets out in Appendix 'A' column 4, the costs associated with the Partnership's projects and management service in 2020/21, including estimated pay and price levels.

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

- AONB Manager (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)

Estimated 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, this estimate 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 maintenance of existing funding settlement, which includes a small inflationary increase on 2019/20 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

significant 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. Expenditure

It is proposed that total expenditure will be £393,680 in 2019/20. 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 2020/21 towards core costs and projects costs of £226,670 is based on an inflationary increase on grant offer for 2019/20.

The estimated contributions from local 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. 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 2019/20, 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 proposed 2020/21 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 for FY2020/21