

Forest of Bowland AONB Business Plan 2011 – 2014

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Background

At the Joint Advisory Committee meeting in April 2011, the AONB Officer outlined the intention to draft an AONB Unit business plan to guide the work of the Unit; particularly in light of the reduced partnership budget and staffing arrangements.

This commenced in April 2011, with all members of the team and LCC Countryside Officers taking part in review to prioritise key objective and actions of the AONB Management Plan to be delivered over the next three years. This prioritisation process formed the basis for the business plan.

In addition, the AONB Officer consulted with officers from AONB funding partners on the draft business plan, receiving comments and suggestions on how the plan can best reflect local authority priorities for the AONB over the next three years.

The Business Plan

The plan sets out how the AONB Unit will contribute to the work of the Partnership in achieving the long-term vision for the AONB:

'...the Forest of Bowland retains its sense of local distinctiveness, notably the large-scale open moorland character of the Bowland Fells, traditional buildings and settlement patterns of villages, hamlets and farmsteads. Natural and cultural resources are sympathetically managed and contribute to a sustainable and vibrant local economy. The management of the Forest of Bowland AONB has improved the quality of the landscape for all stakeholders.'

The AONB Unit is working towards four key outcomes:

1. An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage
2. Resilient and sustainable communities
3. A strong connection between people and the landscape
4. A dynamic and effective AONB partnership

This plan will guide the work of the AONB Unit from 2011 to 2014. The actions within it link directly to the implementation of the statutory AONB Management Plan and links are shown against each action. It is designed to be a rolling 3-year plan, which will be reviewed and updated annually.

Implications for the delivery of the AONB Management Plan 2009 – 2014

As will be apparent, some AONB Management Plan objectives and actions have been given a lower priority for the work of the Unit and are therefore not included in the business plan. The Unit will work with all AONB partner organisations to update monitoring of the delivery of the Management Plan; helping to identify gaps.

Working groups are likely to be formed or re-established to investigate ways in which the wider partnership can help address these gaps in delivery in the remaining plan period.

Decision Required

The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the report, provide comments and, if minded, approve the AONB Business Plan 2011 – 2014
- ii. approve the suggested approach to address gaps in delivery of the AONB Management Plan 2009 – 2014