

NATIONAL PARK PROPOSAL UPDATE AND NATIONAL REVIEW CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Summary: A progress review on the exploration of the merits for a Cotswolds National Park.

Recommendation: To note the progress, overall reactions and interest in the idea of a Cotswolds National Park.

Officer Ref: Martin Lane, Director

Overall resume of activity and progress since March 2018:

1. Further to the Board's discussion at its March meeting;
 - In April:
 - The Board made a formal approach to Natural England's (NE) Chairman requesting that NE considers designating the Cotswolds a National Park.
 - The Board released a discussion document on the potential for a Cotswolds National Park in order to help advance discussion and consideration of the idea in April and a shorter resume document in July.
 - In May:
 - Government announced that Julian Glover would chair the National Parks and AONB Review.
 - In June:
 - Officers undertook a briefing for National Trust managers on the emerging case for or against a Cotswolds National Park.
 - Members of the Advisory Panel working with Julian Glover were announced.
 - In July:
 - The Board's Chairman and Director met with Andrew Sells, NE Chairman and Henry Robinson, NE Board Member to discuss the National Park idea.
 - The Board's officers and Chairman undertook a briefing for NFU and CLA members at the RAU.
 - The National Trust hosted and the Chair of the Gloucestershire branch of CPRE and the Board's Vice Chair jointly chaired a meeting of the local and national charity and non governmental sector organisations with an interest in conservation and access to discuss the potential for a National Park.
 - In August:
 - The Board was invited by NE to submit initial Natural Beauty and Recreation criterion tables outlining the natural beauty and recreation credentials and scope of a Cotswolds National Park. This submission

was made in early August. NE have confirmed that they have received criterion tables for two other areas interested in potential National Park designation i.e. Dorset / East Devon and South Devon and anticipate receiving tables for the Chilterns.

- The Board hosted a visit from two members of the Review Advisory Panel; Dame Fiona Reynolds and Jim Dixon, along with a member of the secretariat review team. The visit had three elements: an introduction to the Cotswolds AONB, the remit and work of the Conservation Board and discussion of the idea for a Cotswolds National Park.
- In September
 - Various requests for briefings and presentations are being received from interested groups and societies e.g Oxon CPRE, Campden Society.
 - Meetings are being arranged with Local Authority partners across the Autumn.
2. The Review's remit is detailed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review/terms-of-reference>
 3. It is now due to call for evidence from October, although the precise mechanisms for making a submission are not known at this stage.
 4. The initial Natural Beauty and Recreation criterion tables submitted to NE are provided in Appendix 1 & 2. Board members are invited to suggest additions and improvements to the evidence submitted.
 5. The Review plans to report to Government in September 2019.

Supporting papers:

Appendix 'A' - Cotswolds National Park - Evaluation Framework for Natural Beauty Criterion

Appendix 'B' - Cotswolds National Park - Evaluation Framework for Recreation Criterion