**TASK AND FINISH AND WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

**Summary:** A progress update on the Board’s task and finish and working groups.

**Recommendation: To note the progress updates.**

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**Background**

1. The report below provides a summary of the work of the task and finish and working groups from early September until late October.

**Caring for the Cotswolds Task and Finish group**

* + Date of next meeting: tba.
  + Last Caring for the Cotswolds new member event (10 October 2018) was cancelled due to a lack of response.
  + Our intention is to plan a ‘thanks’ event for existing members (to which potential new members will also be invited) for Christmas /New Year.
  + With the last few contributions, the scheme has now raised £36,013 overall.
  + Calls for funding applications closed on 31/10/18.

**Rural Skills Task & Finish Group**.

* + Date of next meeting (postponed from 7th November 2018 due to annual hedge-laying competition on 10th November): provisional date of Friday 30th November 2018.
  + This re-scheduled meeting will target i) review of fees for remaining Rural Skills courses and suggested increases, ii) opportunities for business development, iii) development of coppicing and charcoal production programme, and iv) review of new schools programme.

**A417 Task & Finish Group**

* + Meeting held with Highways England on 20th October to discuss earlier requests for information, concerns over land bridge options and suggestions for improvements to Option 30. HE is appraising the alternative suggestions and plan to feed the suggestions and initial appraisals into a wider workshop planned for 7th November.
  + Date of next meeting: tba

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**Dark Skies Task & Finish Group**

* + Working draft of report considered, areas for inclusion identified and text amendments made
  + Potential Dark Sky Core Area boundary digitised on GIS
  + Initial draft of Dark Skies and Artificial Lighting Position Statement discussed. Amendments made and areas to include identified
  + Date of next meeting: 9th November (if required)

**Walking & Exploring Working Group**

* + Date of next meeting: tba

**Planning & Infrastructure Working Group**

* + Meeting held on 17th October 2018.
  + The Working Group has discussed a number of issues, including:
    - the protocol for how the Planning and Landscape Officer engages with the Group on planning-related consultations;
    - the work programme associated with the Group’s Terms of Reference;
    - the consultation status of the Board (both legal and actual)
    - the challenge from the External Funding Working Group to secure more income for the Board through planning-related work.
  + Priorities for the next few months will include the Planning and Landscape Officer ensuring that the Group is appropriately consulted on planning-related issues, developing a protocol with local planning authorities and responding to the challenge of the External Funding Working Group.
* Date of next meeting: 10th January 2019.

**External Funding Working Group**

* List of items for sponsorship drawn up by Officers for October meeting.
* Meeting of 23rd October postponed.
* Date of next meeting: 6th December following the Board meeting

**Supporting paper(s):**

**None**