**Cotswolds Conservation Board**

**Initial summary of responses from the review of Task and Finish Groups and Working Groups, February 2019**

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| Board member response rate: 12 responses or 34% response rate |
| What works well with the Task & Finish and Working Groups?   * Using the range of skills and backgrounds of Board members. * Clearer focus on outcomes/ outputs and making a difference. * Fewer, more focussed meetings overall. * Improved communication. * Less formal than sub committees, more discussion. * Less paperwork. * Leads to a better understanding of issues. * Short/ concise notes of meetings. * Involvement of non Board member / previous Board member expertise. |
| What doesn’t work well?   * Lack of time / knowledge to consider planning consultations/ responses. * Keeping everyone up to speed and aware of what each group is doing. * Groups not driving agendas, too much time spent on updating. * Knowledge of how project budgets are costed and reflect any internal recharges. |
| Is the group delivering against its remit: Yes or No?   * Members thought the groups were delivering their remits. |
| What could Board members have done to make the group more effective or efficient?   * Preparation for meetings. * Reading papers issued in advance thoroughly. |
| What could the Board do to make the group more effective or efficient?   * Appoint Board members to groups based on their skills base, don’t appoint to simply fill a seat on a group. * Consider each Board member being on at least one group. * Issue automatic diary reminders to members that a meeting is imminent. * Consider if groups should have their own budgets and powers to drive forward agendas. * Ensure some secretary of State appointees have planning experience. * Consider use of interns / apprentices to strengthen staff resource. |
| Are the task and finish groups and working groups more or less effective and efficient than the previous sub committees?  If yes, why?   * Clearer focus on results, better use of officer time.   If no, why?   * Sub committees had more status and weren’t seen as short term or temporary. * Concern that some previous Grants Sub Committee decisions, which are now with the Executive Committee, are lost from sight. * Concern that some previous Conserving & Managing Sub Committee work streams were not being pursued. |
| Should we go back to a formal sub committee structure:   * Overwhelming majority did not want to return to a sub committee structure. |
| Should we establish new task and finish or working groups? If so, which ones?   * Yes, but only as we shut down old groups. * Shorter term focussed task and finish groups seen as being most effective. * Potential new groups:   + Natural capital of the AONB.   + Social, financial and health and wellbeing benefits of the AONB.   + Cultural capital of the AONB.   + Agi-environment.   + National Park planning.   + Governance & Finance.   + Relations with local authorities and other stakeholders.   + Tourism. |

Notes:

Some new appointees to the Board were understandably not able to compare the Task and Finish or Working groups with the previous Sub Committee structure – and admitted that they were still learning about the AONB and Board’s work.

The Board has two vacancies at present: 1 parish appointee and 1 SoS appointee, so 35 Board members, not 37.

18.02.19