

GENERAL UPDATES

Summary: To provide the Executive Committee with an update on activities across the organisation.

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee notes the various updates.

Report by: Simon Smith – Development and Special Projects Officer

Mark Connelly – Land Management Officer

Scott Mills – Project Officer

James Webb – Partnerships and Fundraising Officer

EXTERNAL BIDS

1. Key points to note:

- The pause on main Heritage Lottery programmes due to their Covid response is impacting on a number of initiatives. Latest intelligence is that main programmes will not be reopening until 2021 and then only partially or even not until 2022. Officers are keeping the situation and its consequences under review.
- The National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative has similarly been held up, though the signs of it resuming are more hopeful.
- There has been a focus on developmental activity around nature recovery through Big Chalk and engaging young people.

CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP

2. The remit of the working group is to:

- Review the Climate Change Strategy for the Cotswolds AONB
- Understand how climate change is likely to impact on the ecosystem services and special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB.
- Recommend to the Board any follow up review, where required, of relevant position statements and guidance

3. The Working Group has met twice; 25 June 2020 and 6 August 2020.

4. Members of the Group are Richard Lloyd (Chair), Brendan Costelloe, Norman Kay, Dom Morris, John Matthews, Chris Crookall-Fallon (CDC Climate Change Officer).

5. Progress to date includes:

- Discussed national and local context
- Discussed the 2012 Climate Change Strategy and how to approach it's review
- Drafted a revised soils and water section for discussion
- Agreed how to tackle the Energy and Economy section and identified key points to consider
- Drafted a set of high level principles for nature based solutions
- Received a presentation and discussed the proposed Nature Recovery Plan (NRP) for the Cotswolds and the Big Chalk proposal.

- To ensure consistency it was agreed that Richard Lloyd joins the Nature Recovery Plan Working Group
6. Actions for the next meeting on 16 September:
- Finalise draft Soils and Water section
 - Draft the revised Energy and Economy section
 - Draft a revised Woodland and trees section

FUNDRAISING WORKING GROUP

7. The newly formed Fundraising Working Group consists of Brendan Costelloe (Chair), Liz Eyre and Phil Chapman.
8. The group first met in May to discuss the Kingfisher Trail. Feedback from the group was instrumental in the early development of the project. Members provided ongoing support, which helped refine the project.
9. The group has recently received an update on the progress of Caring for the Cotswolds. Feedback from this update will be actioned once the new website has gone live.
10. Looking ahead, there will be more opportunities for the group to get involved as the Kingfisher Trail goes live and we look to grow the membership of Caring for the Cotswolds.

COTSWOLDS CHAMPIONS STEERING GROUP

11. The first Cotswolds Champions (CC) Programme Steering Group meeting took place on 9 June 2020. Members include Scott Brown, Mark Connelly, John Mills, Ben Stokes (CCB member for South Glos) and Garry King (CCB SoS member). All present. Angela Bence-Wilkins, Landscape Architect at South Gloucestershire Council, has subsequently agreed to join the Group as an external member. The meeting primarily involved agreeing upon CC Programme objectives and processes for assessing project proposals and releasing funding.
12. The following project proposals were also considered at the 9 June meeting:
 - **Rail Corridor Enhancement Project:** Proposal to co-deliver the project in partnership with FWAG_SW approved (using c.£200k mitigation sum). The process of setting up the 'partnership agreement' has helped establish new options for collaborative working and funding arrangements between CCB and partners. The project will highlight FWAG_SW as a valued CCB partner whilst also bringing their expertise and specialist skills to the project, most notably in respect to natural capital mapping, stakeholder engagement and project design specification. The project will initially focus on delivery at seven target sites for mitigation planting in winter 2020/21.
 - **Caring for the Cotswolds (CftC):** Proposal to channel £25,000 through CftC approved. This will ensure some Network Rail funding supports small grants for community-led projects, allowing the CC Programme to focus on major projects only, whilst also avoiding running parallel small grant schemes.
 - **Kingfisher Trail:** Proposal to support project with £25,000 grant approved, enabling the project to get underway.

13. The second CC Programme Steering Group meeting is scheduled for 22 Sept 2020.

Meeting agenda will include:

- **Rail Corridor Enhancement Project:** review of progress, including assessment of proposal for community orchard at Old Sodbury (target site).
- **Little Avon Catchment Improvement Project (BART):** assessment of application for £48k grant to deliver a project in headwaters and kick-start catchment-wide scheme (BART highlighted as target CC Programme partner)
- **Wildlife Trusts:** possible assessments of £20k grant for GWT Golden Valley project; £20k for WWT By Brook project (Glos, Wilts and Avon Trusts all target CC programme partners).

Supporting documents

Appendix A. External Bids Update

SEPTEMBER 2020