

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Summary: To (1) provide a high level summary of activity since the last Executive Committee in November 2020; (2) report on any new or emerging risks; (3) outline the key decisions/ discussions required from this Meeting.

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee notes the report

Report by: Andy Parsons - Chief Executive

PRIORITY ACTIVITY SINCE THE LAST MEETING (not recorded in other papers)

1. Team

- We are currently recruiting for a Trails and Access Officer (0.6fte) who will (1) lead on the access element of the Bathscapes project (National Lottery Heritage Fund) and (2) support Becky Jones, Access and Volunteer Lead, on Cotswold Way National Trail and other access/ trails issues. Interviews are scheduled for the first week of March.
- The work to move Rural Skills to the main website is nearing completion. The courses will also be bookable online, ensuring an easier customer journey. The Rural Skills programme will not restart until April at the earliest. Ed Bonn and James Webb will be presenting an outline Business Plan to the Board in March.
- The Voluntary Wardens' activity is currently limited to Parish Wardening.
- Currently in negotiation with our landlord, Relish and Cotswolds Radio to sub-lease the two downstairs rooms when the current licence expires on 31 March.

2. Engagements (Chief Executive)

- 19 Nov – attended the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership Board Meeting.
- 19 Nov – attended the National Association of AONBs AGM.
- 21 Nov – appeared on BBC Radio Gloucestershire to talk about Ourboretum.
- 26 Nov – attended the NAAONB 'Collaboration Group' meeting.
- 30 Nov – attended a Defra meeting for all National Park and AONB Lead Officers. The focus was of Future Farming (and the Agricultural Transition Plan) and the concept of a new National Landscape Service.
- 30 Nov – attended a Partnership Board Meeting for *Discover England's Walking Trails* (a Discover England Fund project).
- 1 Dec – attended the SW National Landscapes Forum.
- 7 Dec – attended the GFirst LEP 'Visitor Economy and Tourism Business Group' meeting.
- 16 Dec – held the first 'Vision for the Cotswolds' Task and Finish Group meeting.
- 18 Jan – with Clive Webster, met with representatives of Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council to discuss various issues.
- 19 Jan – with Cate Le Grice-Mack, Mark Connelly and Simon Smith, met with the CEO and Chair of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.
- 21 Jan – attended the Glos Local Nature Partnership Board meeting.
- 27 Jan – met with representatives of CPRE Sussex and Kent to discuss Conservation Board status, as they are liaising with High Weald AONB about the potential of them becoming a Conservation Board.

- 11 Feb - attended the GFirst LEP 'Visitor Economy and Tourism Business Group' meeting.

CORPORATE RISK

3. The Risk Management Framework and Key Risk Register is normally presented at this meeting. It has been agreed to move this to the May Executive Committee, followed by seeking adoption at the June Board.
4. The Covid-19 Risk Register is also being monitored as required.
5. Although there are no significant risks (new or emerging), there are some risks that are worth noting:
 - At the time of writing the report, the core Defra budget for 2021/22 remains unknown. In our budgeting, see Item 6, we have assumed that the grant figure will remain unchanged from 2020/21.
 - Possible/ likely impacts of the pandemic:
 - Capacity of partner organisations to deliver projects on time
 - Endowment 'grant giving' trusts and foundations seeing investment portfolio underperforming and therefore reducing grants they award
 - Viability of subtenants at the Old Prison – annual income from leases now in the region of £15,000
 - Reduction in disposable income leading to a reduction in donations

OVERVIEW OF THIS BOARD MEETING – 24 February

6. The key items of focus at this meeting are:
 - Item 5 – to review our financial position at the end of Q3 and how this has impacted on the forecasted year-end position.
 - Item 6 – to discuss the Work Programme and Budget for 2021/22, ahead of seeking Board adoption in March.
 - Item 8 – after a lot of discussion over the past months, the new Employee Handbook is ready for approval.
 - Items 12 – James Webb will be presenting a detailed update on the Kingfisher Trail project, including artists; sponsors; PR and communications; financial position.

SUPPORTING PAPERS

- None

FEBRUARY 2021