

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Summary:** To (1) provide a high level summary of activity since the last Board meeting in February 2023 and (2) outline the key decisions/ discussions required from this meeting.

**Recommendation:** That the Board notes the report.

**Report by:** Andy Parsons - Chief Executive

**KEY ACTIVITY** (not included in other papers)**1. Regional and National Activity****Protected Landscapes Partnership**

- Development of the new 'Protected Landscapes Partnership' continues. The partnership includes National Parks, AONBs, National Trails and Natural England, with funding and oversight coming from Defra.
- A Partnership Manager is now in post, and a Chair and EDI Champion are currently being recruited.
- The key workstreams of Green Finance, Nature Recovery and Equity, Diversity & Inclusion are being allocated funding over two financial years (2023/24 and 2024/25) to demonstrate the value-add of the partnership at a local (as well as national) level.

**Cotswolds Plus Local Visitor Economy Partnership**

- Following the recent 'De Bois' review of England's destination management/ marketing organisations (DMOs), Visit England is moving away from engaging directly with the current 250+ DMOs and, instead, accrediting around 40 new Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs).
- To date, 15 new LVEPs have been launched.
- A potential new Cotswolds Plus LVEP, which covers the following DMO areas: Cotswolds Tourism, Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism, Marketing Cheltenham, Visit Gloucester, Visit Gloucestershire, and the local authority areas of Stroud and Tewkesbury, has recently submitted its application to Visit England and a decision should be made in the next few weeks.
- I have been asked to Chair the Management Board of this LVEP, with its membership including:
  - Cotswolds Tourism:
    - Councillor Tony Dale | Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation at Cotswold District Council
    - Councillor Duncan Enright | Deputy Leader at West Oxfordshire District Council
  - Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism:
    - Andrew Blake | Wye Valley AONB Manager
  - Marketing Cheltenham:
    - Councillor Max Wilkinson | Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing at Cheltenham Borough Council
  - Visit Gloucester:
    - Philip Walker | Head of Culture at Gloucester City Council

- Visit Gloucestershire:
  - David Owen | Director of Economy and Environment at Gloucestershire County Council
- James Webb, Becky Jones and Alana Hopkins will also be involved in developing the eight core workstreams of the LVEP.
- A further update will be provided if the LVEP application is successful.

## 2. Team, Board Members and Volunteers

### Team

- New starters:
  - Magda Glanowska – Head of Finance
  - Lorna Baggett – GCG Biodiversity Net Gain Programme Officer
  - Nina Stubbington – New to Nature 12-month placement
- Vacancies:
  - A new Farming in Protected Landscapes Farming Engagement Officer is currently being recruited

### Board Members

- Following the local elections in May we welcome two new Board Members:
  - Nigel Adcock – Tewkesbury Borough Council
  - Juliet Layton – Cotswold District Council (replacing Clive Webster)
- We are awaiting confirmation from Wychavon District Council.
- We are also awaiting confirmation from Defra about the outcomes of the recent Secretary of State interviews. With Ed Macalister-Smith leaving the Board at the end of June there will be two vacancies.

### Volunteers

- Following District AGMs the following roles have been confirmed:
  - Head Warden – Mike Cripps
  - Deputy Head Warden – Sarah West
  - District Chairs:
    - Avon – Ian Hutchinson
    - Central – John Milroy
    - East – Linda Shelley
    - North – Rory McDonald
    - South – Sally Nicholas

## 3. Property Matters

- The team moved into the new office locations on 1 May. These are the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust sites at Robinswood Hill Country Park (Gloucester) and Greystones Farm Nature Reserve (Bourton on the Water), as well as office space at Cotswold Business Centre (Upper Rissington).
- Negotiations with our landlord have concluded and the dilapidations settlement has been paid. The lease officially ends on 18 July.

### **KEY ENGAGEMENTS (Chief Executive)**

- A417 Missing Link:
  - 28 April – Protester Action Planning meeting

- 1 March – A417 filming at Crickley Hill Country Park
- 7 March, 18 April – dry stone wall stakeholder workshops
- 14 March, 18 April, 13 June – Project Delivery Panel scheme update meeting
- 17 May – Biodiversity Net Gain programme meeting.
- 24 May – Public Rights of Way meeting.
- 2 March – Visitor Economy and Tourism Business group meeting.
- 8 March – Protected Landscapes Partnership workshop at Defra’s offices in London.
- 16 March, 11 May – Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership Board meeting.
- 21 March – National Grid’s ‘Visual Impact Provision’ reference group meeting.
- 11 May – site visit and presentation to National Grid’s VIP Advisory Group.
- 22 May – Voluntary Warden’s Executive Meeting.
- 25 May – Oxfordshire Visitor Economy Destination Management Plan workshop.
- 8 June – Cotswold Canals Partnership Board meeting.
- 9 June – Volunteer’s Conference at the RAU.
- 16 June – walked a section of the Cotswold Way with Polly Martin (CEO of National Trails UK) and Becky Jones.

### **OVERVIEW OF THIS BOARD MEETING – 27 JUNE**

The key items of focus at this meeting are:

- Item 6(a) – following a joint review from the Planning & Infrastructure and Climate Action Working Groups, the Renewable Energy Position Statement is being presented for Board adoption.
- Item 6(b) – the Neighbourhood Planning Position Statement is also being presented for Board adoption.
- Item 6(c) – the Layman’s Guide of the Small World Consulting technical report on the CNL’s carbon baseline is being presented for approval, along with the activity plan for the remainder of 2023/24.
- Item 6(d) – the national rebrand of AONBs in England and Wales to ‘National Landscapes’ will be rolled out later this year. The Board will hear about the journey to date and what it means for the CNL.
- Item 7(c) – to hear from the Board’s new Head of Finance about the year-end financial results.
- Item 7(d) – the updated Treasury Management Strategy is being presented for adoption by the Board.

### **SUPPORTING PAPERS**

- None

JUNE 2023