

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Summary: To seek the views of the Board on the development of the 2025 – 2030 Management Plan.

Recommendations: That the Board comments on version 1 of the plan.

Report by: Simon Smith – Nature Recovery Lead

INTRODUCTION

1. The Board approved the production schedule for the 2025 – 2030 Management Plan in February 2024. In accordance with this schedule an early version has been produced for a consultation with key public bodies throughout July and early August. The Executive Committee considered an earlier draft at its meeting in May 2024 and a draft incorporating comments from the Executive Committee and team members is attached (Appendix A), which the Board is invited to comment on. This early stage is the best time to comment on the structure, particularly the selection of key issues and outcomes.

UPDATE ON POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

2. In April 2024 Natural England issued an updated version of the "*Draft Management Plan Guidance For Protected Landscapes in England*". It runs to 180 pages and was accompanied by a more concise "*Additional guidance note to support Protected Landscapes in developing Management Plans (2024/25)*". This guidance note lists the following "*Mandatory and essential elements to include in Protected Landscape Management Plans*":
 - Ambition, action and targets to further PL statutory purposes. (Our ambition is expressed through the outcomes and actions through the policies).
 - Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework
 - 30by30
 - Local Nature Recovery Strategies
 - Climate Change Adaptation Plans
 - Strategic Environmental Assessments and Habitat Regulations Assessments
 - Interconnectedness of the above elements. It states that if the above plans strategies and targets are included in an appendix/addendum they must be viewed with the same weight as the core body of text

It also states that "*The following elements should be considered as part of the Management Plan development and implementation:*"

 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - Progress reporting (this relates to after the production of the plan)

3. The National Landscape Association Climate and Nature Panel has developed a set of "*Principles for Addressing Nature Recovery in Management Plans*". These principles are:
 - Be ambitious
 - Use the Lawton principles and more
 - Contribute to Protected Landscape Targets and Outcomes Framework
 - Use Nature Recovery Plans
 - Reference Local Nature Recovery Strategies
 - Include evolving conservation practice
 - The panel has started work on a similar set of principles relating to climate change.

PROGRESS TO DATE

4. Some of the changes made to the plan to date include:
 - First tentative attempts to incorporate the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework, 30by30 and Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
 - A check of the current content against the principles for addressing nature recovery.
 - With the benefit of the national work being undertaken by the Planning Lead, revisions have been made to accommodate the protected landscapes seek to further duty including a rewritten appendix.
 - Water has been given greater emphasis under an outcome of its own. As a consequence, natural and cultural capital is no longer valid as an outcome in its own right and has been integrated into landscape with soil going to land management.
 - The Climate Change content has been reviewed and revised by the Climate Change Lead (Technical)
 - Following feedback at the May Executive Committee each outcome is now followed by a brief statement before the relevant policy or policies. These are intended to state concisely and in plain language the primary drivers for change or in other words "what is going on". Located after the outcome and before the policies these statements are a powerful indicator of the issues that the policies are intended to address. The current statements are mostly the most appropriate content moved from the policies supporting text. They already improve readability and the strength of messaging.
5. Following the guidance that Strategic Environmental Assessments and Habitat Regulations Assessments will still be required, the consultant who undertook this work for the 2023 – 2025 plan has been engaged and a scoping report is nearly ready for consultation.

NEXT STEPS

6. The draft attached is a work in progress and it will continue to evolve as it goes to consultation.
7. Selected Board Members have been invited to join a Working Group.
8. Key contacts for public bodies have been invited to a workshop on the 11th July 2024 where relevant CNL subject leads will be available to discuss the plan.
9. The Board strategy day scheduled for October 2024 will examine the theme of “thriving rural communities” and its outcomes can be incorporated into the wider management plan consultation scheduled for late autumn early winter.

SUPPORTING PAPERS

- Appendix A - Management Plan 2025 - 2030 V1.2

July 2024