Members of the Chilterns Conservation Board for the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Chilterns Conservation Board Executive Committee on

19th September 2018 at 10.00am

Chilterns Conservation Board
The Lodge, Station Road, Chinnor OX39 4HA

Agenda

1. Election of Chairman
2. Apologies
3. Declaration of Interest
4. Minutes
5. Matters Arising
6. Public Question Time
7. Finance Report
8. Review of Treasury Management
9. Review of National Parks and AONBs
10. A.O.B.

Future Meetings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Board</td>
<td>17th October 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20th February 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26th June (and AGM) 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16th October 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Committee</td>
<td>23rd January 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22nd May 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18th September 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Committee</td>
<td>21st November 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Present:
Alison Doggett  Board Member
Cllr. John Griffin  Board Member
John Nicholls  Board Member
Prof. Ray Payne  Board Member
Cllr Ian Reay  Board Member Chairman
Cllr Nick Rose  Board Member
Helen Tuffs  Board Member

In attendance:
Sue Holden  CCB Chief Officer
Graham Hurst  CCB Finance Officer
Deirdre Hansen  Clerk to the Board

17/18.24 Apologies for absence.
Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr David Collins

17/18.25 Declarations of interest
No declarations of interest were made.

17/18.26 Minutes of the previous meeting
The minutes of the meeting of 24th January 2018 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair after the following amendment was made: 17/18.21 2nd paragraph “items” was changed to “item”.

17/18.27 Matters arising
None.

17/18.28 Public Question Time
No public present.

17/18.29 Finance Report
The Finance Officer had circulated a financial report to the Committee on the financial position to the end of the financial year 31st March 2018.

1. The year showed a surplus of £27,551, this will be offset the following two years by an anticipated deficit. As reported before the timing of projects can be uncertain, leaving income and expenditure out of line.
2. The internal auditors had visited in May 2018 and there were no matters to report.
3. There is an element of confusion regarding the external auditors, which are appointed by a third party and the CCB have no say in this. The Finance Officer is seeking clarification.

Members discussed the financial report.

1. **The Committee NOTED the financial results for the year ending 31 March 2018.**

**17/18.30 Budget 2018-19**

The Finance Officer had presented an updated budget for 2018-19 following the results for 2017-18. With projections for 2019-20 and 2020-21 also presented.

1. The expected net loss of £25,753 should be viewed in context with the 2017-18 surplus of £27,551.
2. The timing of project work remains difficult to predict as mentioned before.
3. The CCB anticipates to balance its finances in the years to 2020-21, which means the reserves remain unchanged.
4. Sufficient reserves are required to provide cashflow for projects as expenditure and income are frequently not in line.
5. The website needs updating and the Chief Officer will bring a proposal if additional funds are required for this.

The Committee discussed the budget as well as grants and funding more generally.

1. **The Committee NOTED the updated budget 2018-19.**

**17/18.31 Financial Regulations**

The Finance Officer had reviewed the financial regulations and noted that since the last update in April 2017, they were working as intended. The internal auditors had no further comments to make. No changes were required.

1. **The Committee NOTED that the Financial Regulations had been reviewed and that no changes were required.**

**17/18.32 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

The Finance Officer informed the Committee that everything is in place to comply with GDPR. He provided details on the actions that had been taken. And it was noted some further work will be undertaken.

Committee members provided comment on the Finance Officer’s report.

1. **The Committee NOTED the action that had been taken by the CCB in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.**

**17/18.33 Partnership working in the Chilterns.**
The Countryside Officer joined the meeting.
The Chief Officer and the Countryside Officer brought a proposal for increasing partnership working across the Chilterns to the Committee.

1. The Chief Officer had noted that many in the Chilterns want more partnership working. The new Management Plan under development is a good starting point to take forward this goal as key players in the Chilterns have a shared responsibility for conserving and enhancing the Chilterns: The Management Plan is theirs.

2. The Countryside Offer reminded the Committee that the CCB has always done many forms of partnership, but there is a gap for a strategic partnership.

Committee Members put forward suggestions and discussed the principles. It was acknowledged that partnership working will gradually evolve, the first step is the Management Plan, which can underpin them.

1. The Committee CONSIDERED and ADVISED on the ambitions of Partnership working in the Chilterns and the options for taking this forward.

17/18.34 Any Other Business

1. National Park Status:
The Chief Officer brought to the Committee’s attention Cheryl Gillan MP’s call for enhanced protection for the Chilterns AONB. The creation of a National Park would provide enhanced protection and planning powers for the Chilterns. The Committee discussed the proposition. It was agreed that:
   a. The Chilterns AONB meets the conditions outlined by Natural England for National Park status
   b. The Chilterns AONB can deliver significant opportunities for open air and recreational facilities, key criteria for National Park status.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Committee would recommend to the Board that the CCB should make a formal bid to Natural England for the status of a National Park.

1. The Committee AGREED to make a recommendation to the Board to make a formal bid to Natural England for the status of National Park.

2. Secretary of State Appointees:

It was noted that a number of applicants had come forward for this appointment and that interviews would take place early June.

Next meeting: Wednesday 19th September 2018 at 10.00 am at the offices of the Board in Chinnor.

The Chairman……………………………………………….. Date……………………

4
Item 7  

Finance Report

Author: Graham Hurst, Finance Officer

Summary: The accounts for the four months to July 2018 show an excess of expenditure of £3,339 which is less than with forecasts.

Purpose of Report: To advise members of the Board’s financial position at July 2018.

Background

1. Based upon the budget approved at the start of the year we would expect a prorated deficit of £8,584 for the four months to July.

2. The CCB actual deficit to July is £3,339 which arises for several reasons:

3. Core income to date is below budget mainly because of the timing of that income although we are currently projecting to meet budget for the year.

4. Core expenditure is less than budget which again arises mainly because of timing. Overall expenditure is currently forecast to be below budget for the year.

5. Project Income and expenditure is irregular regarding certainty and timing. Where a project is forecast to take more than one year to complete, income and expenditure is spread over that period rather than accounted for as actually received and spent.

Recommendation

1. To note the CCB financial results for the four month period to July 2018.
## Chiltern Conservation Board

### Finance Report Year to 31 March 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>Annual Budget 2017/18</th>
<th>4 months Budget to 31 July 2018</th>
<th>Actual year to 31 July 2018</th>
<th>Projected outcome 2018/19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Sector</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defra</td>
<td>£434541</td>
<td>£144847</td>
<td>£144847</td>
<td>£434541</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Authorities</td>
<td>£106000</td>
<td>£35333</td>
<td>£35333</td>
<td>£106000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>540541</td>
<td>180180</td>
<td>180180</td>
<td></td>
<td>540541</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Core income** | 555616 | 185205 | 180977 | 555616 |

### Expenditure

| Employment | 362842 | 120947 | 127000 | 362842 |
| Members’ Allowances | 16482 | 5494 | 3961 | 12000 |
| Premises | 29423 | 9808 | 10426 | 29423 |
| Office Costs | 16699 | 5566 | 2595 | 16699 |
| IT | 15500 | 5167 | 3471 | 15500 |
| Finance | 12030 | 4010 | 3290 | 12030 |
| Management Plan review | 25000 | 8333 | 5264 | 25000 |
| Special Projects | 5000 | 1667 | 0 | 5000 |
| Engagement | 5000 | 1667 | 1667 | 5000 |
| Planning Consultancy | 9200 | 3067 | 1500 | 9200 |
| Website | 20000 | 6667 | 480 | 20000 |
| Outstanding Chilterns mag. | 6000 | 2000 | 9664 | 6000 |
| Other costs centres < £5000 budget | 28210 | 9403 | 6945 | 28210 |

| **Core Expenditure** | 551386 | 183795 | 176262 | 546904 |

| **Core Net income / (expenditure)** | 4230 | 1410 | 4715 | 8712 |

### Major Projects

#### Chalk Streams

| Income | 32500 | 10833 | 2430 | 32500 |
| Expenditure | 35000 | 11667 | 2916 | 35000 |

| **Net** | -2500 | -833 | -486 | -2500 |

#### Chilterns Woodlands contribution

| -5000 | -1667 | -5000 | -5000 |

#### Hillocks Delivery

| Income | 256600 | 85533 | 22461 | 256600 |
| Expenditure | 262850 | 87617 | 22462 | 262850 |

| **Net** | -6250 | -2083 | 0 | -6250 |

#### Landscape Partnership Development

| Income | 107430 | 35810 | 43532 | 107430 |
| Expenditure | 114930 | 38310 | 46032 | 114930 |

| **Net** | -7500 | -2500 | -2500 | -7500 |

#### HS2

| Income | 31267 | 10422 | 11510 | 31267 |
| Expenditure | 40000 | 13333 | 11510 | 40000 |

| **Net** | -8733 | -2911 | 0 | -8733 |

#### Chiltern Walking / Food Festival

| Income | 11665 | 3888 | 3328 | 11665 |
| Expenditure | 11665 | 3888 | 3328 | 11665 |

| **Net** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

#### North Chilterns

| Income | 11000 | 3667 | 0 | 11000 |
| Expenditure | 11000 | 3667 | 68 | 11000 |

| **Net** | 0 | 0 | -68 | 0 |

| **Project Net income / (expenditure)** | -29983 | -9994 | -7986 | -29983 |

| **Total Net Income (Expenditure)** | -25753 | -8584 | -3272 | -21271 |

| Grand total income | 1006078 | 335359 | 264238 | 1006078 |
| Grand total expenditure | 1031831 | 343944 | 267577 | 1027349 |

| **Grand total net** | -25753 | -8584 | -3339 | -21271 |
Item 8  

Treasury Management Review  

Author: Graham Hurst, Finance Officer  

Summary: The annual review of the Treasury Management strategy.  


Background  

1. It is deemed good practice, by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy to annually review Treasury management strategy. The Board previously reviewed this matter in September 2017.  

2. The Board’s current strategy is to invest surplus funds in deposit accounts where the risk of losing capital is minimal. The alternative would be to invest directly or indirectly in investment products which may offer a higher interest rate, but the value of the capital invested is also subject to the fluctuations of the market.  

3. Deposit account rates continue to be low, under 1% and typically 0.5%  

Recommendation  

1. The CCB continue to maximise interest received from deposit accounts where the risk of losing capital is reduced
Item 9  

**Review of National Parks and AONBs**

**Author:** Sue Holden, Chief Officer

**Summary:** The Review group has started work and we are expecting a call for evidence in September to which the CCB will respond. There is no formal response to the CCB request for a Chilterns Review, but various partner organisations have offered initial views.

**Purpose:** To update the Executive Committee on the Review of National Parks and AONBs, and the Chilterns Review, and share proposed subjects for the CCB’s response to the call for evidence

**Background**

The Review of National Parks and AONBs was a commitment in the government’s 25 year Environment Plan and the objectives were given in a paper to the CCB’s June board meeting. The review should report Autumn 2019.

I joined four other AONB Lead Officers and the National Association for the first AONB meeting with the Chair of the Review, Julian Glover. He stressed the positive purposes of the review and that he is keen the Review considers the further potential and impact of designated landscapes (DLs).

We discussed what national means in our context and how AONBs might better deliver for the nation. We explained that, unlike National Parks, AONBs are not always understood as ‘special’ and not recognised as a brand, despite equivalence in landscape status. We discussed the role of AONBs in setting a framework for any future land management scheme, and how we might develop work around natural capital and ecosystem services to provide priorities for a new scheme. We talked about the impact of development pressure, particularly in the South East, and our ability (or lack of) to influence this.

The Review Chair came to the annual AONB conference and took part in two briefing sessions. Cheryl Gillan MP and I have a meeting with him in the diary in early October.

The NAAONB has contracted Ruth Chambers, previously Head of Policy at the Council for National Parks, to help develop an advocacy strategy for the Review.

**The Call for Evidence**

It is expected that there will be a call for evidence from the Review Group very soon. We do not yet know the scope or timetable for the call but it would be my intention to raise the following, subject to discussion with Board Members.
1. The AONB designation, especially in the south-east of England, needs strengthening. Consideration of one equal designation should be given (with different governance models)
2. Planning powers for the CCB need to be strengthened including making the CCB a statutory consultee on all planning matters
3. An additional power is needed to allow the creation of an AONB-wide development plan, placing special qualities and communities at the heart of a strategic landscape-scale plan
4. Confirmation is needed that the natural beauty and special qualities of AONBs in the south-east of England (36% of land area) should not be compromised due to development pressure. With this, there must be research into landscape capacity and change and cross-government agreement on acceptable impact.
5. The responsibility ‘to have due regard’ in Section 85 of the CRoW Act 2000 needs to be strengthened
6. Public bodies should have a duty to implement the AONB Management Plan
7. Confirmation is needed that AONBs are for the nation, for everyone and for ever, and should increase our relevance to a far greater proportion of people in the south-east
8. AONBs with the potential to engage and benefit large nearby populations especially urban areas, should be granted dedicated resources for access, recreation and health and well-being. Consideration should be given to strengthening ‘the second purpose’ to include health and well-being
9. Consideration given to DLs being placed at the heart of a new environmental land management system to deliver across all ecosystem services, using our management plans to direct prioritisation of future support but also placing us and other designated sites, at the heart of a network for nature
10. New National Parks should be created to ensure more landscapes and more people benefit from the strong brand and strategic conservation and access management
11. The status of the Chilterns should be reviewed, to be considered for National Park status or for a new model should be created with the branding and powers of a National Park (but not necessarily all the functions)
12. That core government funding (central and local) must be maintained for the CCB to fulfil its core purposes (external funding can be raised for delivery of projects, but alternative funding is not available for core functions)
13. That more flexibility is needed in governance models, especially for Conservation Boards
14. That a commission or central team is needed to facilitate collaboration and delivery across landscape organisations, provide a single strong voice for DLs and provide central services and expertise in a more effective way than is possible for some AONBs at the moment.

The Chilterns Review

We have not had a response from Natural England to our request for a review of the Chilterns designation though we have had a positive first conversation with regional Natural England colleagues. I assume that consideration of requests is on hold whilst the Review of National Parks and AONBs takes place. The Review is not
considering individual requests, but it will ask the generic question ‘should there be more national parks’. The National Association of AONBs has discussed requests for a change of designation and decided to support them. The Council for National Parks have said they are not against new parks, as long as new resources are given. National Parks are concerned that new parks will weaken the brand, that the criteria for NP status might be lowered and that funding for parks will be spread too thinly.

I have had initial conversations with partner organisations such as BBOWT, Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust and Chiltern Society about the question and have positive comments from most. I have also been discussing it with local authority officers as I meet them to discuss the draft management plan.

Most local authorities have not considered the question of national park status formally, but a couple have had initial discussions. Hertfordshire County Council approved a recommendation that Council agree ‘to explore the opportunity of the Chilterns AONB becoming a national park’. South Oxfordshire District Council councillors discussed a recommendation to support the government’s Review of National Parks and AONBs, and “expressed views that designation as a National Park would offer greater protection for the district’s Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty against development and expansion from neighbouring areas as well as serving to conserve and enhance the natural environment.”

**Next Steps**

The National Association has convened a meeting of all AONBs late September to discuss our collective and individual responses. The National Parks and AONBs of the South-East and East of England (SEEPL) meet early September and are discussing a regional response.

By the time the Board meets on 17 October, I hope the scope of the call for evidence and the plans for national and regional responses, will be clear but for now, a steer on the above proposed content of the CCB response, from Executive Committee, is welcome.

**Recommendation**

1. That the committee note progress and discuss the proposed content of the CCB response to the call for evidence.