



## **Executive Committee**

**10.30 a.m. 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012  
The Lodge, Chinnor**

### **Agenda**

1. Apologies
2. Declaration of Interest
3. Minutes
4. Matters Arising
5. Public Question Time
6. Finance Report April - Oct 2012
7. Report on Presentation of the Budget
8. Review of Financial Regulations
9. Changing the date of the AGM and Review of Members' Allowances
10. Report on Home Working Policy
11. Appointment of Box Woodland Project Officer
12. Proposal for Special Project Study Leave
13. Report on HS2
14. Update on Ash Die-back
15. A.O.B.
16. Dates of Meetings



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER 2012 at THE LODGE, 90 STATION ROAD, CHINNOR OXON. OX39 4HA COMMENCING AT 10.30 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 13.00 PM**

**Present:**

Mike Fox	Board Member, Chairman of the meeting
Heather Barrett-Mold	Board Member
Cllr John Griffin	Board member
Cllr Marion Mustoe	Board member
Ray Payne	Board member
Cllr Jeremy Ryman	Board member
Cllr Bill Storey	Board Member
Cllr Alan Walters	Board Member

Steve Rodrick	CCB Chief Officer
Chris Smith	CCB Finance Officer

In attendance	
Deirdre Hansen	Clerk to the Board

**12/13 -16 Item 1- Apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from: Cllr Shirley Judges and Cllr Richard Pushman,

**12/13-17. Item 2- Declarations of interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**12/13-18. Item 3- Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**12/13-19. Item 4- Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012:**

- Re item 12/13.14-1. The Chief Officer, Chairman and the Strategic Access Officer had met with a representative from Natural England and have been invited to a meeting with the Management Committee for the Ridgeway and Thames Path National Trails.
- Re item 12/13.14-3. An independent report on the future of forestry in England has now been published. It is possible that, in future, more local bodies will be invited to work directly with the Forestry Commission. There may be scope for the CCB to get involved. The possibility of additional Government support for forestry cannot be ruled out.

**12/13-20. Item 5- Public Question time**

No members of the public were present.

**12/13-21. Item 6- Finance Report:**

The Finance Officer advised members of the Board's financial position to the end of August and the likely position at the end of the financial year. To the end of August the expenditure against the core budget was 3.7% below profile and income 3.7% above profile. Including projects total expenditure is 8.1% below profile and income 7.3% below profile. The end of year forecast for the core budget was a small surplus ( forecast to be £13,385) rather than a small deficit , mainly due to higher than anticipated local authority grants and improved earned income performance. In accordance with Board policy core surpluses are added to the Development Reserve.

The current financial position is satisfactory. The detailed review of financial activity at the end of the quarter has resulted in some changes to the anticipated final outturn as shown in the documents provided to the meeting.

**1. The Committee NOTED the current financial position.****12/13-22. Item 7- Medium Term Financial Plan 2012-2015:**

The Chief Officer and the Finance Officer outlined the revised medium term plan for the period 2012-2015 as adopted at the last meeting, reflecting the final results for 2011-12. The Finance Officer went through the figures and explained the aim to balance the books by 2014-15.

The revised medium term plan has been revised to reflect the experience of 2011-12, the budget for 2012-12 and the anticipated changes to the operating environment for the next three financial years.

1. The Committee has approved a 1% pay award for 2012-13, the same again for 2013-14 and a 2% award in 2014-15.
2. Further negotiations with external Chalk Streams funders have resulted in an increase in activity.
3. There may be an expenditure increase in some area including employers' pension contributions, when the results of the forthcoming triennial valuation of the pension fund are known.
4. In recent months the Committee and the Board have approved a number of initiatives that had not been included in the original 2012-13 plans. They have now been included in the updated plan
  - Olympics and Diamond Jubilee £0, previously £3,000
  - Research grant fund £5,000
  - IT replacement £3,000
  - Box woodland project £3,000
  - Historic Farmsteads survey £15,000 over 3 years
  - Chilterns Tourism website. £3,000
  - People and places booklet £5,000
  - Management Plan review £0 previously £12,000
  - Ridgeway trail £0, previously £3,00
  - Local nature partnerships £3,000
5. The overall forecast position at the end of 2014-15 is now reflected as follows:

- The core budget for 2015-16 would be unfunded to the tune of £55,514 subject to the comments above
- The general reserve will be unchanged at £135,000
- The budget equalisation reserve will reduce to £56,105
- The development reserve will fall to £123,259
- Earmarked reserves will fall to £65,280
- Restricted reserves will remain unchanged at £22,977
- Total reserves will fall to £402,621

The Committee reviewed the figures and were satisfied with the forecasts. They would continue to review and revise the financial plans. It was also agreed to take a closer look at whether the general reserve needs to be maintained at its current level.

**1. The Committee APPROVED the updated Medium Term Financial Plan for 2012-2015 subject to the discussed changes.**

**12/13-23. Item 8- Treasury Management**

The Finance Officer advised the members on the interim review of the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011-12. In line with good practice the Board re-adopted its Treasury Management Strategy in March 2012. Funds that are temporarily surplus are invested. The average rate achieved during the year was 1.27%. The original income forecast for 2011-12 was £7,000. The actual income generated was £9,448. In line with Treasury Management policy no sums are invested for more than 364 days.

**1. The Committee NOTED the Treasury Management performance for 2011-12.**

**12/13-24. Item 9- Report on Insurance Cover**

The Chief Officer reported that insurance renewal is due on 03/12/12. The Board needs to review its policy on the insurance cover required for the organisation in particular capital items and business interruption. The current annual premium is £8,549. It is suggested that at least a £2,000 reduction in premium can be achieved by insuring less. Particularly those items of equipment which are exposed to little risk and can readily and affordably be replaced. One approach would be to insure only those items which are exposed to a certain level of risk as they are:

1. Regularly taken out of the office
2. Attractive to thieves
3. Fragile
4. Especially important for the operation of the Board.

The Committee discussed the capital items to be insured using the above criteria. The current value of insured items and content is £100,000 using the above criteria the value would be reduced to approx. £25,000.

A large element of the premium is the cover for business interruption. With advances in IT management back up and running are considerably easier. Already

in place is the provision for a virtual server. With the scope for staff working from home this type of cover is less necessary.

It was not proposed to reduce cover for all forms of liability associated with staff, Board members, volunteers and the public.

An insurance broker, J Bennett based in High Wycombe has been invited to advise the Board on its insurance needs and to get the best value cover.

- 1. The Committee AGREED that insurance cover from December 2012 should be based on a lower level of cover for capital items and business interruption.**
- 2. The Committee NOTED the appointment of an insurance broker, J. Bennett to advise on insurance cover and to help secure the best value and most appropriate policy.**

#### **12/13-25. Item 10- Review of Risk Register:**

The Chief Officer and Finance Officer had reviewed the risk register and had concluded that in the majority of cases the control measures in place are adequate to control the risk facing the Board. The risk of a greater than forecast cut in grants has been recorded.

The Committee reviewed the latest version of the Risk Register as it does every six months. Effective risk management required a reporting and review structure to ensure that risks are identified and assessed and that appropriate controls and responses are in place.

- 1. The Committee CONFIRMED this version of the Risk Register as controlling risk currently faced by the Board.**
- 2. The Committee NOTED that the Register will be reviewed again in six months' time.**

#### **12/13-26 item 11- Report of the Secretary of State Appointments to the Board**

The Chief Officer reported that the Secretary of State appoints 8 members to the Board. The terms of several Secretary of State Appointments have recently been extended and it has been confirmed that the vacancy created by Kevin Mayne's resignation will be filled by April 2013. The Committee was updated on the terms of appointment. The members were asked to promote the opportunity to join the Board when the current vacancy is advertised.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the request to assist DEFRA's appointments process by actively promoting, in and around the Chilterns, the opportunity to join the Board.**

#### **12/13-27 item 12- Report on HS2**

The Chief Officer gave details on recent and planned activities relating to HS2. Recent activities include:

1. Meeting with the Secretary of State for Transport
2. Exchange of letters with the Secretary of State
3. Attendance at Community forum meetings.
4. Receipt of Scoping report for the Environmental Impact Assessment.
5. Meeting with HS2 Ltd on selection of viewpoints to be used for the visual assessment.
6. Development of tunnelling options.

Planned activities include:

1. Assessment of final version of the scoping report for the EIA
2. Attendance at Community forums
3. Participation in the Bucks Mitigation panel.
4. Liaison with HS2 Ltd on visual assessment.

The Committee discussed the various activities and further requirements.

- 1. The Committee AGREED that the Board should request that the HS2Ltd/DfT undertake a full valuation study of the actual and national costs and benefits of a full length bored tunnel under the Chilterns.**
- 2. The Committee AGREED that the Board should request, once again, that the Government applies the National Ecosystems Assessment Methodology to determine the potential and value of impact of HS2.**

#### **12/13-28. Item 13- Report on Proposed Farm Advice Project:**

The Chief Officer informed the Committee that the Board has been invited by the Environment Agency (EA) to lead jointly a Chilterns Farm Advice Project. The aims of the project are to improve the ecological status of Chilterns rivers and promote good farming practices to reduce water use and diffuse pollution.

This is part of an emerging pattern of joint initiatives involving the Board/Chalk Streams Project, the EA and other partners such as the Thames River Restoration Trust. The water companies and Natural England have also been invited to contribute. The purpose of the report is to seek the Committee's approval for the proposed Board input to the Chilterns Farm Advice Project.

1. Diffuse pollution arising from agricultural practices in the wider catchment has a major impact on water quality of a number of the streams and groundwater- chalk river species are particularly sensitive to pollution.
2. Phase 1 of the project, led by the EA, will identify sources of sediments and diffuse pollutants.
3. It is proposed that the Board will lead on phase 2 (April 2013 to March 2015). It is anticipated that that much of the direct advisory work on the ground will be carried out by consultants on a call-down basis.
4. Funding is available from the EA over the project period, subject to match funding from the Board of up to £4,000 ( cash) plus in kind contributions ( staff time) of up to £16,000 in total. The budget would include an element of recovery of costs incurred by the Board over and above the agreed contribution in managing and delivering the project.
5. The Board's in-kind contribution would largely be the input of the Landscape and Conservation Officer and the Chilterns Chalk Stream Officer spending around a day a month for 30 months on the project. Additionally there would be 0.5 days a month input from other team members.

6. The project would contribute directly to achieving a number of policies and actions in the AONB Management Plan.

The Chief Officer gave brief updates on other projects:

1. Sarratt weir removals project
2. River Chess.

- 1. The Committee APPROVED the agreement for the Board's input to the Chilterns Farm Advice Project.**

- 2. The Committee NOTED the update on the Sarratt meadows weir removal scheme and other projects.**

**12/13-29. Item 14- AONB Boundary and Management Plan :**

The Chief Officer highlighted the need to consider whether to include in the AONB Management Plan review recommendations for changing the boundary. The programme for reviewing the AONB Management Plan includes public consultation in late summer /autumn 2013. By then the Board needs to have decided whether to include recommendations for a boundary review.

The Committee reviewed the scope of proposed changes and the time table for review.

- 1. The Committee RECOMMENDS to the Board that it includes in the AONB Management Plan review for proposals for changing the boundary.**
- 2. The Committee AGREED that a special workshop be held for Board members in early November to consider the need for changes to the AONB Management Plan.**

**12/13-30. Item 15- Changes in the Planning system:**

The Chief Officer reported that the Government has recently announced a package of measures to promote growth in the construction sector. Without specific caveats there are likely to be implications for the AONB. At the moment nothing has been published. Because of the likely detrimental impacts the Board, together with AONBs and National Park Authorities, should seek reassurances from Government that none of the proposed changes will apply to article 1(5) land (which includes AONBs). Reassurances should also be sought that all current regulations and prior approval procedures will remain in place. The Planning Officers report was reviewed.

- 1. The Committee AGREED to make representations to Government as outlined in the report paragraphs 8-14 and seeks support from local MPs.**

**12/13-31. Item 16- Any other business:**

There was no other business

**12/13-32. Future meeting dates: Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012 at 10.30am at the offices in Chinnor.**

The meeting closed at 13.00pm

The Chairman..... Dates.....



**Item 6      Finance Report April – Oct 2012**

**Author:** Chris Smith                  Finance Officer

**Summary**                                  To the end of November 2012 the expenditure against the core budget was 2.5% below profile and income 4.2% above profile. Total expenditure, including projects, is 7.3% below profile and income 3.2% below profile. The end of year core surplus is currently forecast to be £22,365, largely due to higher than anticipated local authority grants, a reduction in the insurance premium, and improved earned income performance. In accordance with Board policy core surpluses are added to the Development Reserve.

**Purpose of Report:**                  To advise members of the Board's financial position to the end of November and likely position at the end of the financial year.

**Background**

1.     The current financial position is satisfactory with no significant problems to report.
2.     In view of the importance of income generation a detailed sheet of "other income" is attached for the Committee's information.
3.     "Non-core projects" are those funded by DEFRA (SDF and Chalk Streams), and others funded by other external sources and from reserves. Environment Agency grant funding for Chalk Streams received in 2011-12 will be applied to project work in the current year.
4.     Earned income is currently forecast to be £8,420 higher than the budget at £36,410. This includes improved Countryside Festival performance where the final surplus to the Board amounts to £5,948. Improved performance is also being recorded on Getting Close to Nature, the Planning Conference and interest on investments.
5.     Although expenditure is below the profile it is anticipated that this will change by the end of the year.
6.     A review of insurance has resulted in a renewal premium of £4,290 compared to the previous figure of £8,550.
7.     A detailed review of financial activity is undertaken at the end of each quarter, particularly on employment costs such as employers' national insurance. These reviews have resulted in some changes to the

anticipated final outturn as shown in the attached document and include the higher than anticipated local authority grant income.

**Recommendations:**

- 1. To note the current financial position.**

BUDGET CONTROL 2012-13							
MONTH 8: NOVEMBER 2012							
Description	Annual Budget	Profiled Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance	Projected Outturn	Year End Variance	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Expenditure</b>							
<b>Department 100:</b>							
<b>Promotion and Awareness</b>							
<b>Core expenditure:</b>							
Information Officer & E&A Officer	(90,385)	(60,257)	(60,374)	(117)	(90,555)	(170)	
Travel and subsistence	(1,700)	(1,133)	(860)	274	(1,700)	-	
Subscriptions magazines / newspapers	(525)	(350)	(230)	120	(525)	-	
Web site	(1,750)	(1,167)	(288)	879	(800)	950	
Printing & distribution costs	(1,900)	(1,267)	(401)	866	(1,900)	-	
Events and exhibitions	(1,500)	(1,000)	(478)	522	(1,500)	-	
Miscellaneous	(200)	(133)	(97)	36	(200)	-	
<b>Core projects:</b>							
103 Countryside Festival	(5,185)	(3,457)	(5,534)	(2,077)	(5,185)	-	
105 Annual Report	(1,180)	(970)	(1,048)	(78)	(1,050)	130	
106 Annual Forum	(1,500)	(200)	(170)	30	(805)	695	
107 Chalk and Trees	(12,365)	(6,300)	(5,814)	486	(11,850)	515	
108 Environmental education	(1,000)	-	(19)	(19)	(500)	500	
109 Getting Close to Nature	(1,000)	(667)	(1,987)	(1,320)	(2,750)	(1,750)	
110 Enjoying Woodlands	(3,500)	-	-	-	(3,500)	-	
111 Environmental Tourism	(1,000)	(667)	(54)	613	(500)	500	
113 Historic Environment	(2,000)	(1,333)	-	1,333	(2,000)	-	
114 People & Places Booklet	-	-	-	-	(5,000)	(5,000)	From Development Reserve (or SDF)
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(126,690)</b>	<b>(78,900)</b>	<b>(77,353)</b>	<b>1,547</b>	<b>(130,320)</b>	<b>(3,630)</b>	

## BUDGET CONTROL 2012-13

## MONTH 8: NOVEMBER 2012

Description	Annual Budget	Profiled Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance	Projected Outturn	Year End Variance	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Department 200:</b>							
<b>Countryside Management</b>							
<b>Core expenditure:</b>							
Countryside & FLU Officer	(74,570)	(49,713)	(49,806)	(92)	(74,705)	(135)	
Travel and subsistence	(1,200)	(800)	(224)	576	(1,200)	-	
Publications	(100)	(67)	(24)	43	(75)	25	
Events / exhibitions	(300)	(200)	-	200	(250)	50	
Subscriptions: organisations	-	-	(50)	(50)	(90)	(90)	virement
Miscellaneous	(200)	(133)	(40)	93	(85)	115	virement
<b>Core projects:</b>							
203 Commons	(5,000)	(4,700)	(4,715)	(15)	(5,000)	-	Including £4,000 applied to Commons Project
204 Chalk grassland group	(1,000)	(667)	(626)	40	(1,000)	-	
205 Land management survey	(5,000)	(3,500)	(3,423)	77	(5,000)	-	From Development Reserve
206 State of Environment Report	(1,600)	(1,067)	-	1,067	(1,600)	-	
207 Support for Trees & Woods Mgt	(3,500)	-	-	-	(3,500)	-	
210 Small Works	(4,000)	(100)	(100)	-	(4,000)	-	New budget funded from reductions to 203 and 204
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(96,470)</b>	<b>(60,947)</b>	<b>(59,009)</b>	<b>1,938</b>	<b>(96,505)</b>	<b>(35)</b>	

## BUDGET CONTROL 2012-13

## MONTH 8: NOVEMBER 2012

Description	Annual Budget	Profiled Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance	Projected Outturn	Year End Variance	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Department 300:</b>							
<b>Planning and development</b>							
<b>300 Core expenditure:</b>							
Planning Officer	(61,085)	(40,723)	(40,807)	(84)	(61,215)	(130)	
Travel & subsistence	(1,180)	(787)	(964)	(178)	(1,180)	-	
Miscellaneous	(150)	(100)	-	100	(150)	-	
<b>Core projects:</b>							
301 Planning Committee	(520)	(250)	(254)	(4)	(520)	-	
302 Planning conference	(1,200)	(700)	(722)	(22)	(1,200)	-	Expenditure matched by income
303 Design Guidance	(25)	-	(1)	(1)	(25)	-	
304 Building design awards	(1,500)	(1,500)	(1,259)	241	(1,510)	(10)	
305 Technical assistance / training	(1,700)	(1,133)	(344)	790	(1,700)	-	Includes £200 for parish and town council training
310 Planning Policies	(1,500)	-	-	-	-	1,500	
311 High Speed Two	(5,000)	(3,333)	(1,018)	2,315	(5,000)	-	All expenditure to be met from earmarked reserve
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(73,860)</b>	<b>(48,527)</b>	<b>(45,369)</b>	<b>3,158</b>	<b>(72,500)</b>	<b>1,360</b>	

## BUDGET CONTROL 2012-13

## MONTH 8: NOVEMBER 2012

Description	Annual Budget	Profiled Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance	Projected Outturn	Year End Variance	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Department 400:</b>							
<b>Recreation and Access</b>							
<b>Core expenditure:</b>							
Access Officer	(26,555)	(17,703)	(17,730)	(27)	(26,595)	(40)	
Travel and subsistence	(500)	(333)	(233)	101	(500)	-	
Miscellaneous	(150)	(100)	(48)	52	(150)	-	
<b>Core projects:</b>							
401 Access publicans incl. Country Walks	(2,000)	-	(48)	(48)	(2,000)	-	
402 Access conference	(1,000)	-	60	60	(1,000)	-	Expenditure matched by income
404 Access for all Improvements	(1,100)	(500)	(360)	140	(1,100)	-	New budget funded from 401
405 Cycling in the Chilterns	(3,000)	(1,300)	(1,355)	(55)	(3,000)	-	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(34,305)</b>	<b>(19,937)</b>	<b>(19,715)</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>(34,345)</b>	<b>(40)</b>	

<b>BUDGET CONTROL 2012-13</b>							
<b>MONTH 8: NOVEMBER 2012</b>							
<b>Description</b>	<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>Profiled Budget to date</b>	<b>Actual to date</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Year End Variance</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>		
<b>Department 500:</b>							
<b>Corporate Services</b>							
<b>Core expenditure:</b>							
Chief Officer / Admin Officer	(104,435)	(69,623)	(69,446)	177	(104,570)	(135)	
Travel and subsistence	(1,750)	(1,167)	(1,665)	(498)	(1,750)	-	
Staff training	(2,000)	(1,333)	(3,142)	(1,809)	(3,150)	(1,150)	
Premises	(26,805)	(19,525)	(19,360)	165	(27,095)	(290)	
Office costs	(12,705)	(8,123)	(7,588)	535	(13,205)	(500)	virement
Office furniture & equipment	(750)	(500)	(244)	256	(935)	(185)	
IT (incl OS licences)	(8,275)	(5,517)	(2,551)	2,966	(11,275)	(3,000)	3k from Development Reserve
Photography	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Meetings & events	(435)	(290)	(441)	(151)	(435)	-	
Finance	(18,865)	(12,910)	(13,075)	(165)	(18,865)	-	
Personnel	(1,580)	-	-	-	(1,580)	-	
Legal services	(3,000)	(2,000)	(663)	1,337	(3,000)	-	
Insurance	(8,550)	(1,225)	(1,225)	-	(4,290)	4,260	
Miscellaneous	(565)	(377)	-	377	(565)	-	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(189,715)</b>	<b>(122,590)</b>	<b>(119,400)</b>	<b>3,190</b>	<b>(190,715)</b>	<b>(1,000)</b>	

BUDGET CONTROL 2012-13							
MONTH 8: NOVEMBER 2012							
Description	Annual Budget	Profiled Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance	Projected Outturn	Year End Variance	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Department 600</b>							
<b>Member Services</b>							
<b>Core expenditure:</b>							
Members' allowances	(32,025)	(21,350)	(21,985)	(635)	(32,025)	-	Excludes SDF Panel allowances
Board member training	(1,500)	(1,000)	(1,576)	(576)	(1,500)	-	
Board meetings	(1,000)	(667)	(605)	61	(1,000)	-	
Review of allowances scheme	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Miscellaneous	(50)	(33)	-	33	(50)	-	
<b>Core projects:</b>							
601 Executive Committee	(150)	(100)	(58)	42	(150)	-	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(34,725)</b>	<b>(23,150)</b>	<b>(24,224)</b>	<b>(1,074)</b>	<b>(34,725)</b>	<b>-</b>	



BUDGET CONTROL 2012-13							
MONTH 8: NOVEMBER 2012							
Description	Annual Budget	Profiled Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance	Projected Outturn	Year End Variance	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Central Budgets</b>							
Inflation on non staff costs	-				-		Absorbed in cash limited budgets
502 Project support budget	(2,500)	-	-	-	(2,500)	-	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(2,500)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(2,500)</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>TOTAL CORE EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>(558,265)</b>	<b>(354,050)</b>	<b>(345,069)</b>	<b>8,981</b>	<b>(561,610)</b>	<b>(3,345)</b>	
<b>Other expenditure</b>							
Contribution to SE Protected Landscapes Co-ordinator	(3,000)	(2,500)	(2,100)	400	(2,100)	900	virement #500
Merchandise purchases	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Project expenditure:							
- Chilterns Chalk Streams (Core)	(37,095)	(24,730)	(20,160)	4,570	(37,145)	(50)	
- Chilterns Chalk Streams (Projects)	(37,630)	(25,087)	(14,156)	10,931	(37,630)	-	
- Sustainable Development Fund	(40,000)	(4,750)	(4,759)	(9)	(40,000)	-	Including SDF Panel allowances
- Ancient Woodland Survey	(15,620)	(15,620)	(19,281)	(3,661)	(19,280)	(3,660)	
- Chilterns Commons Project	(122,725)	(55,582)	(40,909)	14,673	(122,790)	(65)	
- Box Woods Project	-	-	(277)	(277)	(9,765)	(9,765)	
<b>GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>(814,335)</b>	<b>(482,319)</b>	<b>(446,712)</b>	<b>35,606</b>	<b>(830,320)</b>	<b>(15,985)</b>	

BUDGET CONTROL 2012-13							
MONTH 8: NOVEMBER 2012							
Description	Annual Budget	Profiled Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance	Projected Outturn	Year End Variance	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Income</b>							
Defra: Core	439,490	329,617	329,617	-	439,490	-	To meet 80% of core expenditure
Local Authorities	96,630	96,630	105,291	8,661	105,290	8,660	
Town and Parish Councils	3,000	2,000	2,593	593	3,000	-	
Merchandise sales	4,000	2,670	2,823	153	4,000	-	
Other earned income	27,990	18,712	28,262	9,550	36,410	8,420	
Red Kite donations	-	-	-	-	-	-	Moved to general income
<b>Sub total</b>	571,110	449,629	468,586	18,957	588,190	17,080	
Defra: SDF	17,900	13,425	13,425	-	17,900	-	
Defra: Chalk Streams	17,800	13,350	13,350	-	17,800	-	
Chalk Streams external income (core)	17,795	15,195	10,050	(5,145)	17,795	-	
Chalk Streams external income (projects)	46,200	22,800	8,990	(13,810)	5,000	(41,200)	£46,000 received 2011-12 and added to reserve
Ancient Woodland Survey external income	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Chilterns Commons Project: HLF	106,500	67,192	39,649	(27,543)	106,500	-	
Chilterns Commons Project: other	16,225	6,500	15,250	8,750	16,225	-	
Box Woods Project: HLF	-	-	-	-	7,515	7,515	
Box Woods Project: Other	-	-	-	-	2,250	2,250	
<b>GRAND TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>793,530</b>	<b>588,091</b>	<b>569,300</b>	<b>(18,791)</b>	<b>779,175</b>	<b>(14,355)</b>	
<b>NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)</b>	<b>(20,805)</b>	<b>105,772</b>	<b>122,587</b>	<b>16,815</b>	<b>(51,145)</b>	<b>(30,340)</b>	

BUDGET CONTROL 2012-13							
MONTH 8: NOVEMBER 2012							
Description	Annual Budget	Profiled Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance	Projected Outturn	Year End Variance	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>RESERVE MOVEMENTS:</b>							
<b>Restricted Reserves:</b>							
- Chalk Streams Reserve	(1,500)	-	-	-	(1,550)	(50)	
- Chalk Streams Reserve (m'ment fees)	8,570	-	-	-	8,570	-	
- Chalk Streams Reserve (projects)	-	-	-	-	(41,200)	(41,200)	£46,000 received 2011-12 and added to reserve
<b>Earmarked Reserves:</b>							
- Budget Equalisation Reserve applied	(2,255)	-	-	-	(2,255)	-	To meet core deficit & SDF shortfall
- Development Reserve applied	(5,000)	-	-	-	(13,000)	(8,000)	For Land Management Survey / IT replacement / People & Places
- Development Reserve increased	-	-	-	-	22,635	22,635	
- Woodland Research applied	(15,620)	-	-	-	(19,280)	(3,660)	For Ancient Woodland Survey
- HS2 Reserve applied	(5,000)	-	-	-	(5,000)	-	
- Commons Reserve applied	-	-	-	-	(65)	(65)	
<b>TOTAL TRANSFERS TO / (FROM) RESERVES</b>	<b>(20,805)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(51,145)</b>	<b>(30,340)</b>	

		Other Income	Budget	Budget	Actual	Variance	Projected
			for year	to date	to date		Outturn
			£	£	£	£	£
8							
100.4900	Promotion & Awareness	Earned income	260	173	660	487	600
103	Countryside Festival	Income	7,185	7,185	11,482	4,297	7,185
106.4900	Annual Forum	Income	500	333	404	71	450
107.4004	Chalk & Trees/What's on	Advertising income	4,150	2,767	2,307	(460)	4,400
107.4901	Chalk & Trees	Electronic subscriptions	400	267	260	(7)	280
109.4900	Getting Close to Nature		2,200	1,467	3,944	2,478	4,100
108.4900	Environmental Education		250	167	585	418	650
113.4900	Historic Environment		25	17	10	(7)	25
203.4900	Commons		800	533	961	427	960
204.4001	Chalk Grassland		265	177	810	633	810
206.4900	State of the Environment Report		270	180	-	(180)	270
300.4900	Planning	Earned income	670	447	122	(325)	670
305.4900	Technical Assistance		-	-	920	920	950
302.4900	Planning Conference		1,200	1,200	1,831	631	1,830
304.4003	Building Design Awards		500	333	740	407	740
400.4400	Recreation & Access	Advertising income	490	-	50	50	490
401.4900	Access Publications		300	200	133	(68)	300
402.4900	Access Conference		1,000	667	90	(577)	1,000
405.4400	Chilterns Cycleway	Advertising income	200	133	-	(133)	200
500.4008	Corporate	Interest received	7,225	2,400	2,421	21	10,000
500.5900	Unidentified income	Red Kite donations	100	67	533	466	500
			27,990	18,712	28,262	9,550	36,410
	Merchandise sales						
	Promotion & Awareness			980	1,025		
	Planning			20	20		
	Cycleway guidebooks			1,670	1,778		
			4,000	2,670	2,823	153	4,000



5. It is proposed that the core budget be restricted to:

- Employment costs,
- Essential expenditure on the offices and administration
- Members allowances
- Essential services incl. finance, personnel, legal and clerk to the Board
- A small working budget for each department.

6. An early draft of the figures for next year indicates that the effect of this tightening of definition of core expenditure is to reduce the amount allocated to this budget for 2013-14 from £577,815 to £526,215 (a reduction of 8.5%). As an illustration, these costs would be covered by:

DEFRA (80% of core costs)	£420,972
Local Authorities	£ 91,414
Parish and Town Councils	£ 3,000
Earned income (1)	£ 14,000
TOTAL	£529,386

Balance available for projects     £ 3,000

(1) Treasury and income for activity included in the core budget, e.g. advertising revenue from Chalk and Trees)

7. The core activity will be first to receive an allocation from the core income, primarily from DEFRA, local authorities, town and parish council and treasury (ours) generated income.
8. In 2013-14 the total DEFRA grant will be £450,899 of which a maximum of £420 972 can be used for core expenditure, leaving a balance of £29,927.
9. The project will be a combination of those which can be self funded or financed from external sources and those which require a contribution from the Board's own resources (incl. the balance of DEFRA grant). The difference from past practice is that the core budget is no longer sufficient to fund a significant part of the annual work programme. The budget is based on the premise that the Board's prime asset is the knowledge and skill of the staff. Without the staff the Board would be unable to deliver a work programme.
10. The project which would receive the first allocation of additional Board resources is the Chalk Streams Project. For example in 2013-14, of the balance available of DEFRA grant, £16,000 would be allocated to the project leaving a total of £13,927 for the work programme.
11. Examples of the expenditure which would no longer be covered by the core budget include:

- Chalk and Trees second edition
  - Educational Events
  - Small Works
  - Cycle Way
  - Woodlands
  - Countryside Festival
12. Some elements of the work programme are now self financing (Countryside Festival) and no longer need to be included in the core budget; are partially self financing (Chalk and Trees) or can be covered in whole or part by external sources of funding. Most elements will require a contribution from the Board's resources. A number of initiatives can be expected to generate a surplus (e.g. countryside festival, books)
13. It is highly likely that there will be insufficient funds from the Board's annual income of all kinds to fund a Sustainable Development Fund. However the Budget Equalisation Reserve, which will be of the order of £140,000 at the end of 2012-13 will not be needed to balance the core budget and can be used to support the work programme and an SDF, but probably at a lower level than in 2012-13 (£40,000).
14. It is proposed that a re-formatted budget is presented to the Executive Committee with a provisional work programme. The Committee will then need to decide how to allocate the Board's own resources from both the Budget Equalisation and Development Reserves.
15. Criteria to be used to allocate Conservation Board funding:
1. Fit with AONB Management Plan
  2. Fit with Business Plan priorities
  3. Ongoing commitment i.e. to match fund HLF grant
  4. Deemed to be a high short term priority e.g. HS2, Ash dieback
  5. High likelihood of generating additional income.
  6. Represents an unusual or rare opportunity.
16. This format is also likely to show a small deficit in 2014-15 for the core budget but much smaller than the previous format, which may or may not require use of the budget equalisation reserve depending on how successful income generation activities have been.

### **Recommendations**

1. **To approve the proposed new format for the annual budget.**
2. **To approve the proposed criteria for assessing the allocation of Conservation Board funds to projects.**

**Item 8      Review of Financial Regulations**

**Author:** Chris Smith Finance Officer

**Summary** A review has been conducted of the Board's Financial Regulations and Financial Instructions, adopted previously in September 2007.

**Purpose of the Report:** To advise the Committee of amendments to the Financial Regulations and Financial Instructions to reflect the new requirements contained within the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

**Background**

1. It is good practice to review Financial Regulations periodically and additional requirements in the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 provide an opportunity to do that.
2. A review has been conducted by the Finance Officer and a revised set is appended for the Committee's consideration. They are largely unchanged with the exception of the addition of a new section 14, "Payment and Authorisation Procedures"
3. Standing Orders as to Contracts have also been reviewed and no amendments are considered necessary.

**Recommendations**

1. **To adopt the updated set of Financial Regulations.**
2. **To note that the existing set of Standing Orders as to Contracts will remain unchanged.**





# Financial Regulations

Revised December 2012

## **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

### **CONTENTS**

#### **Introduction**

- 1 Responsibilities**
- 2 Accounting Policies**
- 3 Accounting Records**
- 4 Annual Statement of Accounts**
  
- 5 Medium Term Revenue Forecast**
- 6 Revenue Budget**
- 7 Virement**
- 8 Reserves**
- 9 Risk management & Insurance**
- 10 Internal Controls**
- 11 Internal Audit**
- 12 External Audit**
- 13 Treasury Management**
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## INTRODUCTION

### Instructions

- 1 Conservation Boards spend large sums of money and have a duty to account clearly for the money they spend to the public, who pay for the spending through various forms of taxation.
- 2 These Financial Regulations are a part of the overall control framework within which the Chilterns Conservation Board operates. Rather than a barrier to action they should be viewed as providing the framework within which you can act, setting out best practice and ensuring a high quality of financial information enabling better decision making and in turn, improved service delivery and greater client satisfaction.
- 3 The financial control framework can be seen as a hierarchy as set out below.

Financial Regulations	Approved by the Board
Financial Instructions	Approved by the Finance Officer
Manuals of Guidance/Work Procedures	Approved by the Chief Officer

- 4 Finance staff are ready and willing to provide assistance in all areas relating to financial management and financial control. In particular, you should seek advice if you are intending to create a new financial procedure, or amend an existing one.
- 5 The Chief Officer is responsible for ensuring that financial controls are operating effectively. Internal Audit monitors the financial control framework.
- 6 The responsibility for the creation and maintenance of the framework rests with the Finance Officer.
- 7 The Finance Officer welcomes feedback on the operation of Financial Regulations and Financial Instructions to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

## 1 RESPONSIBILITIES

### Preamble

The financial regulations have been written with the intention of delegating responsibility wherever appropriate. This regulation sets out the framework of responsibilities within which that delegation takes place.

### Regulations

- 1.1 These Financial Regulations are made by the Board and are subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972. They set out the working arrangements by which the Board gives effect to its statutory financial responsibilities.
- 1.2 These Financial Regulations apply to all areas of the Board's activities.
- 1.3 The Chief Officer is responsible for the observance of financial regulations and for the training of staff to enable them to comply with these Regulations.
- 1.4 All reports to the Board and Executive Committee must contain a financial appraisal setting out the full financial implications arising from the proposals contained within the report. The financial appraisal must be agreed with the Finance Officer.
- 1.5 The nature and format of all accounting procedures and financial records shall be determined by the Finance Officer.

### Responsibilities

- 1.6 The Finance Officer shall, for the purposes of Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, be responsible for the proper administration of the Board's financial affairs and report to the Board on the discharge of this responsibility.
- 1.7 The Finance Officer has a statutory responsibility for ensuring that adequate systems and procedures exist to account for all income due and expenditure disbursements made on behalf of the Board and that controls operate to protect the Board's assets from loss, waste, fraud or other impropriety. The Finance Officer shall discharge that responsibility in part by the issue and maintenance of Financial Instructions with which all staff of the Board shall comply.
- 1.8 The Chief Officer is individually responsible for the proper financial management of resources allocated through the budget-making process and for the identification of income arising from activities. This includes the control of staff and the security, custody and management of assets

including plant, equipment, buildings, materials, cash and stores relating to his/her service area.

The Chief Officer shall ensure that staff comply with the requirements contained in Financial Regulations and Financial Instructions.

- 1.9 The Finance Officer may delegate, in writing, certain of his responsibilities within Financial Regulations and Instructions to finance staff, within agreed parameters.

## 2 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### Preamble

The Board's statement of accounts must be prepared in accordance with proper practices as set out in the format required by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting: A Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), for each financial year ending 31 March.

### Regulations

- 2.1 The Finance Officer is required to select and consistently apply appropriate accounting policies.
- 2.2 Any changes to accounting policies which may have a financial impact on the Board of more than £1,000 shall be reported to the Board by the Finance Officer.

## 3 ACCOUNTING RECORDS

### Preamble

Maintaining proper accounting records is one of the ways in which the Board discharges its responsibility for stewardship of public resources.

### Regulations

- 3.1 The Finance Officer shall determine the accounting records to be maintained for the Board.
- 3.2 All accounts and records relating to the finances of the Board shall be open to inspection by the Finance Officer.

#### **4 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

##### **Preamble**

The Board has a duty to approve the annual statement of accounts that must fairly present its operations during the year.

##### **Regulations**

- 4.1 The Finance Officer has a duty to ensure that the annual statement of accounts is prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting: A Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).
- 4.2 The Board is required to approve the annual statement of accounts within the laid down timetable set out in the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

#### **5 MEDIUM TERM REVENUE FORECAST**

##### **Preamble**

In order for the Board to be able to plan the development of services and the priorities for the allocation of resources between activities it needs to undertake medium-term financial planning.

##### **Regulations**

- 5.1 The Chief Officer shall prepare a medium term revenue forecast each year, in consultation with the Finance Officer, for submission to the Board.
- 5.2 The Chief Officer shall include the financial effects of all known commitments in the medium term revenue forecasts, together with any other proposals for changes to the level of existing activities, or for new activities.

## 6 REVENUE BUDGET

### Preamble

The revenue budget provides an estimate of the annual income and expenditure requirements for all activities and sets out the financial implications of the Board's policies. It provides the Chief Officer with authority to incur expenditure and a basis on which to monitor the financial performance of the Board. These regulations seek to provide a consistent framework for the preparation and monitoring of the revenue budget.

### Regulations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer shall prepare a draft revenue budget for the next financial year, in consultation with the Finance Officer, for submission to the Board and the appropriate Government department.
- 6.2 The Finance Officer shall specify the format of the revenue budget and the timing of reports, subject to any overriding requirements of the Board.
- 6.3 Expenditure may be incurred within the revenue budget approved by the Board in pursuance of the aims for which those budgets have been established, subject to any other requirements of the Board.
- 6.4 Throughout the year the Chief Officer shall monitor income and expenditure against budgets. The Finance Officer shall provide financial advice to assist the Chief Officer fulfil his responsibilities. The Chief Officer shall supply the Finance Officer with sufficient information to enable accurate budget profiling.
- 6.5 Budget monitoring statements, including a forecast for the full financial year, shall be submitted to the Board by the Chief Officer at times agreed by the Finance Officer.
- 6.6 The Chief Officer shall report on the outturn of income and expenditure, to the Board, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year.
- 6.7 If it appears that net expenditure will be in excess of the approved budget and the excess cannot be contained the Chief Officer shall at the earliest opportunity, following consultation with the Finance Officer, report the matter to the Board. If expenditure in excess of the approved budget is incurred due to an emergency, this emergency expenditure must be reported to the Board as soon as possible thereafter.



## 7 VIREMENT

### Preamble

Virement is a transfer of budget provision either within or between budget headings. It is an important facility to assist in managing budgets effectively within a cash limit. These regulations set out the authorisations required for virement to take place.

### Regulations

- 7.1 The Chief Officer shall ensure that virement is undertaken as necessary to maintain the accuracy of budget monitoring and inform the Finance Officer as soon as practicable.
- 7.2 Virements within approved revenue budgets may be agreed by the Chief Officer and the Finance Officer.
- 7.3 Virements between approved revenue budgets shall be authorised only by the Chief Officer and the Finance Officer.
- 7.4 The approval of the Board shall be required if the virement involves:
  - a Spending outside the policy framework;
  - b An addition to commitments in future years beyond any agreed allocations;
  - c If the Finance Officer requires it.
- 7.5 Income received in excess of the budgeted amount may be spent. This can be achieved by a virement between income and expenditure budgets in accordance with the above regulations.

## 8 RESERVES

### **Preamble**

The general reserve is held as a contingency for unexpected future events. Reserves are also maintained for specific purposes where it is likely that a liability will arise.

### **Regulations**

- 8.1 Any additions or withdrawals from reserves are to be approved by the Board.
- 8.2 The Finance Officer is responsible for advising on prudent levels of reserves in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, taking account of the views of external audit.

## 9 RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

### Preamble

All organisations, whether private or public sector, face risks to people, property and continued operations. Processes need to be in place, therefore, to identify and manage such risks, including arranging external insurance cover where appropriate.

### Regulations

- 9.1 The Board shall approve arrangements for risk management and insurance, and shall review the effectiveness of risk management.
- 9.2 Within the overall policy determined by the Board, the Chief Officer shall effect and administer the risk management policies, including ensuring that:
- Procedures are in place to identify, assess, prevent or contain material known risks, and these procedures are operating effectively throughout the organisation;
  - A monitoring process is in place to review regularly the effectiveness of risk reduction strategies and the operation of these controls. The risk management process should be conducted on a continuing basis with any significant changes to the risk profile being reported to the Executive Committee;
  - Staff know that they are responsible for managing relevant risks and are provided with relevant information on risk management initiatives; and
  - Acceptable levels of risk are determined and insured against where appropriate;
  - The risk register should be presented to the Board annually, together with a risk mitigation plan.
- 9.3 The Chief Officer in conjunction with the Finance Officer shall effect insurance arrangements to mitigate risks where appropriate. The Chief Officer shall administer such insurance arrangements, including ensuring that procedures are in place to investigate claims within the required timescales.
- 9.4 Members of the Board and staff shall promptly notify the Chief Officer of:
- All new risks, of whatever nature, which require to be insured, indicating the scope and amount of cover required, together with variations in existing risks; and
  - Any loss, liability or damage, or of any event likely to lead to a claim, either against the Board or in favour of it.

- 9.5 No member or officer shall admit liability to a claimant, or make any statement that could be construed as such, concerning a matter which is to be dealt with by insurers.

## **10 INTERNAL CONTROLS**

### **Preamble**

The Board faces a wide range of financial, administrative and commercial risks, both from internal and external factors, which threaten the achievement of its objectives. Internal controls are necessary to manage these risks. A Statement on Internal Control has to be prepared and presented with the Annual Statement of Accounts.

### **Regulations**

- 10.1 Internal control refers to the systems of control devised by management to help ensure the Board's objectives are achieved in a manner that promotes economical, efficient and effective use of resources and that the Board's assets and interests are safeguarded.
- 10.2 The Chief Officer, in conjunction with the Finance Officer, shall advise on and implement effective systems of internal control. These arrangements need to ensure compliance with all applicable statutes, regulations and other relevant statements of best practice. The systems should ensure that public funds are properly safeguarded and used economically, efficiently, and in accordance with the statutory and other authorities that govern their use.
- 10.3 The Finance Officer shall establish sound arrangements for planning, appraising, authorising and controlling financial operations in order to achieve continuous improvement, economy, efficiency and effectiveness and for achieving financial performance targets.

## 11 INTERNAL AUDIT

### Preamble

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996, made under sections 23 and 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1982, require the Board to maintain a continuous, adequate and effective internal audit of its accounts. The Board has delegated this responsibility to the “Responsible Financial Officer” (the Finance Officer). The following regulations provide the framework for this statutory duty to be discharged.

### Regulations

- 11.1 The Finance Officer shall maintain an adequate and effective internal audit of the activities of the Board. The Finance Officer’s representatives shall have authority to enter at all times on any premises or land used by the Board and to have access to all correspondence, documents, books or other records of any employee of the Board and appertaining in any way to the activities of the Board. The Finance Officer shall be entitled to require such explanation as he/she considers necessary to establish the correctness of any matter under examination. The Finance Officer shall have the authority to require any employee of the Board to produce cash, stores, or other Board property under his/her control.
- 11.2 The Finance Officer shall have regard to any relevant professional guidelines and any audit standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board of the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies.
- 11.3 The Finance Officer and the Legal Services Officer (at Bucks County Council) shall be notified immediately by the Chief Officer of an financial irregularities or suspected irregularities, or any circumstances which may suggest the possibility of irregularities in the exercise of any of the Board’s functions. Such communication may be oral initially but must be confirmed promptly in writing. Where any allegation relates to the Chief Officer, the Chairman of the Board shall be informed immediately.
- 11.4 The Finance Officer shall determine the scope of any internal enquiries or investigations, subject to consultation with the Legal Services Officer and the Chief Officer.
- 11.5 The Finance Officer and the Legal Services Officer, in consultation with the Chief Officer, shall decide whether any matter under investigation should be referred to the police and take recovery action as appropriate on such matters. The Finance Officer shall keep the Chairman of the Board informed of all cases of suspected fraud or other irregularity, of the action taken, the progress of any investigation and shall inform him

of the outcome when the investigation is concluded.

- 11.6 The Chief Officer shall take steps to minimise the risks of financial irregularities occurring.

## **12 EXTERNAL AUDIT**

### **Preamble**

External audit is a statutory function. The duties of the external auditor are governed by the Audit Commission Act 1988, the Local Government Act 1999, and the Code of Audit Practice.

### **Regulations**

- 12.1 The Audit Commission is responsible for appointing external auditors to the Board. External auditors act in liaison with the Finance Officer and Chief Officer, and have full access to the internal auditors and to internal audit reports.
- 12.2 The Chief Officer shall ensure that external audit reports and the Annual Audit Letter are presented to the Board

## **13 TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

### **Preamble**

The Finance Officer is responsible for the arrangements for managing the Board's cash flow, its borrowing activities and its lending activities, in accordance with policies agreed by the Board. This regulation places a duty on the Finance Officer to keep these arrangements under review.

### **Regulations**

- 13.1 The Finance Officer shall undertake Treasury Management activities in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management

in Local Authorities.

## 14 PAYMENT AUTHORISATION PROCEDURES

### Preamble

To ensure that payments are made only in respect of goods and services ordered legitimately on behalf of the Board, these regulations impose authorisation limits on staff and Board members.

### Regulations

- 14.1 Goods and services shall be ordered in accordance with the following arrangements and authorisations.

Value of Contract	Normal Tendering Requirements	Authorised Personnel
Up to £100	No tendering required	All
£101 - £1,500	At least two verbal quotes recorded on file	All
£1,501 - £3,500	At least three verbal quotes recorded on file	All
£3,501 - £10,000	Three written quotes	Chief Officer
£10,001 - £30,000	Three written quotes	Chief Officer in consultation with Chairman
Over £30,000	Three written quotes	Chief Officer in consultation with Chairman and Board authorisation

- 14.2 The same person shall not authorise for payment any item for which he or she has placed the order.

- 14.3 Payment authorisation shall be carried out in accordance with the following limits.

Board Member / Officer	Authorisation Limit
Chairman	Single signature up to £7,500 Co-signature with Chief Officer or Vice Chairman up to £10,000, or above where authorised by the Board for specified items

Vice Chairman	Single signature up to £7,500 Co-signature with Chief Officer or Chairman up to £10,000, or above where authorised by the Board for specified items	
Chief Officer / Finance Officer	Single signature up to £7,500 Co-signature with Chairman or Vice Chairman up to £10,000, or above where authorised by the Board for specified items	
Planning Officer	Single signature up to £1,000 Co-signature with Administrative Assistant for up to £5,000	
Administrative Officer	Single signature up to £1,000 Co-signature with Planning Officer for up to £5,000	

## GLOSSARY

### Board

This term is used to describe the Chilterns Conservation Board .

### Budget Head

The term Budget Head is used in these Regulations to describe the lowest level of subjective analysis of budget approved by the Board in the annual budget report or any revisions subsequently made to the budget by the Board.

### CIPFA

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

### Finance Officer

This term is used to describe the officer with overall responsibility for the administration of the Board's financial affairs, as set out in Section 112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988

### Virement

This is a technical term used to define the act of transferring resources from one Budget Head to another.



**Item 9**                      **Changing the Date of the AGM and Review of Members' Allowances**

**Author:**                      Steve Rodrick              Chief Officer

**Summary:**                      At its AGM in October 2012 the Board instructed that the Executive Committee to consider the case for moving the AGM from October to June. This report concludes there is a case for such a change.

Along with a possible shift of AGM to June it is suggested that the postponed review of members' allowance be commuted in time for an AGM in June

**Purpose of Report**              To assist members consider the case for changing the AGM to June and whether to instruct a review of members' allowances.

**Background**

1.     The Board's AGM is currently held in October as the Board was launched in December 2004 with the first full meeting in January 2005. It meant that by October, the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the year, the standing orders required the Board to appoint a chairman etc. for the year ahead. Until relatively recently all secretary of state appointed members' terms of appointment ran until December. However that has now been changed by Defra and their terms now begin on 1<sup>st</sup> April. With that change the sense in holding the AGM in October should be questioned.
2.     There is merit considering a change to June for the following reasons:
  - Members appointed by councils will join the Board in May/ June following election in May. By the end of June there should be no vacancies on the Board
  - Members appointed by the Secretary of State in April can seek election to committees without having to wait until October. The counter argument might be that it is better for new members to wait a few months before seeking election.
  - A problem with an AGM in October is that those members subject to appointment in April/May/June cannot, with confidence seek election to a committee for a full year- they may

only be able to serve until April - only 3 meetings into the annual cycle.

3. The Board's accounts need to be approved by the full Board and submitted to the auditor by the end of June. An AGM in late June will still allow this to happen - but it would have to be the last week. Similarly it will be possible for the Board's annual review to be presented to the Board at its June meeting.
4. There are no obvious impediments to changing the AGM to June other than having a short year (Oct 2012- June 2013). The Board will need to appoint a chairman and members of committees at that meeting, but needs to be mindful that at least 3 secretary of state members will stand down on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and thus could not serve for a full year to June 2014. The Board will need to decide if it is acceptable for a chairman or committee member to only serve for a maximum of 9 months. This is of particular relevance given the requirement that the composition of committees in terms of SoS/council/parish members reflects that of the full Board.

### **Members' Allowances**

5. The proposed review of allowances was postponed earlier this year. It is now proposed that such a review takes place in early 2013 and a report presented to the meetings in March 2013 of the Executive Committee and full Board, to take effect at the AGM if it is decided to hold it in June 2013.

### **Terms of Reference of the Review**

1. It is accepted that an allowance should continue to be paid for membership of the full Board, but at what rate?
2. Whether it is appropriate to pay allowances for membership of:
  - a) The Executive Committee
  - b) The Planning Committee
3. If so, at what rate?
4. To consider whether allowances should be dependent upon attendance or a performance measure.
6. The Review panel will consist of the Finance officer, HR advisor to the Board and an independent member. Suggestions will be submitted to the Executive Committee by mid January.
7. The cost is estimated to be approx. £2,000.

**Recommendations**

- 1. The Executive Committee advises the Board to change the AGM from October to June with effect from June 2013.**
- 2. Member's allowances are reviewed and a draft report to be submitted to the Executive Committee in March 2013.**
- 3. The composition of the Review Panel is approved.**

**Item 10****Report on Home Working Policy**

**Author:** Steve Rodrick Chief Officer  
Sally Charman HR advisor to the Board

**Summary:** As a consequence of changing business requirements there is a need to amend our Home Working Policy.

**Purpose of the Report:** For members to endorse the revision to our Home Working Policy

**Home Working Policy**

1. Currently our policy covers situations where an employee requests permission to work at home. It does not cover circumstances where the Board requires the employee to work at home.
2. To support the future delivery of some specific projects which are part of our overall programme, it would be operationally beneficial and cost effective to employ these staff to be based at home.
3. The proposed Home Working Policy is attached as Appendix 1.
4. If the Board determines for business reasons that a role is to be designated as home based, then the employee should be appointed on a home worker's agreement (Appendix 2). Initially this will require an assessment as to the applicant's suitability for a home working role - it will not suit everyone – Appendix 3.
5. Appropriate authorisation and relevant contractual documents must be in place before home-working arrangements commence. This also means that these staff will not be provided with a designated work station, but will have the use of a "hot desk" within the office.
6. The newly created Box Woodland Project Officer post will be home based.

**Recommendation**

1. **To approve the amendments to the Homework Policy.**
2. **To require a formal Home Workers Agreement to be signed by both CCB and the employee where home-working is a requirement of the post.**

Draft - Revised wording for Policies and Procedures.

## 22 Home working Policy

### Introduction

Occasionally, the Board may determine that a role should be designated as home based for business reasons and an employee will then be appointed under a home worker's agreement. Appropriate authorisation and relevant contractual documents must be in place before home-working arrangements are implemented. This also means that they will not be provided with a designated work station, but will have the use of a "hot desk" within the office.

The following cover situations where an employee wishes to request they be given permission to work at home.

1. The CCB recognises that there may, on occasion, be circumstances when an employee believes that it would help them to complete particular tasks of their work programme if they worked at home rather than in the office. This policy aims to clarify the circumstances when such a request may be approved.
2. However, it is not possible to offer home working to all staff as the requirements of some jobs will not be suitable for such arrangements, and also consideration needs to be given to the cover at the office and the impact on remaining staff.
3. Permission is required for each occasion that an employee wishes to work at home. The employee should make the request to their Manager, and serious consideration will be given with a decision regarding the suitability for the employee to work at home taking into account all relevant circumstances. The decision of the Manager is final.
4. In making a request the officer must show that the task to be completed requires working conditions which cannot be found in the office, but could be found in their home.
5. The following principles underpin the working at home policy:
  1. The request is related to the undertaking of a specific task, which is identified as a priority in the work programme.
  2. The request is made to the line manager in good time, normally at least 5 working days in advance, but it is recognised that a request may be made at relatively short notice as a means of meeting a relatively short term deadline.
  3. It is a piece of work which requires working conditions which cannot be found in the Board's offices.

4. Normally the piece of work to be undertaken can be completed, or largely completed, within a normal working day.
  5. A request to work successive days at home is unlikely to be approved, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
  6. The day to be spent working at home must fit in with other work commitments and employees must record the hours worked at home, as they would have done in the office. The normal flexi-working system applies.
  7. Whilst working at home the employee must use the remote working facility and be contactable by phone and e mail.
  8. Employees are required to comply with CCB's Health and Safety Policy, and are expected to provide and maintain a suitable safe and healthy environment in which to work at home.
  9. In the event of an employee being sick during a period of working at home, then the normal sickness reporting rules must be followed
  10. Employees are advised that working from home may affect the provisions of any home contents insurance and are advised to inform the insurers prior to commencing working from home. It is the responsibility of employees to ensure that their home contents policy covers any CCB equipment used for the purposes of working at home.
6. Employees, before making a request, must take into account the consequences of working at home rather than in the office, e.g. the impact on others by not being available to take phone calls directly or to help with general tasks in the office.
  7. There will be occasions when you have a commitment to attend a meeting, site visit etc. which is close to your home. Depending upon the time of that commitment it may make more sense to:
    - a) go directly from home rather than via the office or
    - b) go home afterwards to work rather than make a journey back to the office.

In either case this should result in a saving of time and travelling cost.

8. In such cases the agreement of your line manager should be sought if the home working period would be in excess of 2 hours. All other conditions for home working apply. In particular you should be contactable and have a specific piece of work to undertake.
9. There must be a formal record of the request to work at home, the decision of the line manager and the hours worked at home.

## **The Chilterns Conservation Board Home workers Agreement**

This agreement applies to all employees, permanent or fixed-term, whose contract of employment requires them to work at home for either part or all of their contracted working hours, as opposed to working in an office or other workplace.

This Agreement is made on [insert date]

Between **CCB**, and:

**Name:**

**Address**

A copy of this agreement should be kept by both the home worker and their line manager, with the original being sent to the Office Administrator to be held on the employee's personnel file.

### **The home worker agrees:**

1. To ensure that their line manager is aware of their hours worked and uses the most appropriate means of ensuring how they are recorded and accounted for and to keep the workplace generally informed of their movements. An inability to account for any working hours will be treated as unauthorised absence and may be subject to disciplinary action under CCB' disciplinary policy & procedure.
2. To maintain the work calendar ensuring up to date appointments and visits details to enable effective communication and contact
3. To attend meetings with his/her manager, as reasonably requested or agreed with his/her manager, including regular one to ones.
4. To attend CCB' premises or other locations as appropriate, to attend formal or informal meetings or training.
5. To allow CCB to arrange and carry out a risk assessment of the work activities carried out in the home workers' home, if requested.
6. To provide a reliable personal broadband connection to use on CCB business.
7. To take reasonable care to safeguard CCB's property at all times.
8. To ensure that use of email or CCB' Intranet is undertaken in line with CCB' Acceptable Use of CCB Computer Systems policy and in adherence with the Data Protection Act.
9. To comply with CCB Expense Policy, this includes completing an Expense Claim Form for all claims for reimbursement of travel expenses. In particular, home workers are not eligible to claim travel expenses from home to the CCB office as this is regarded as personal commuting.
10. To report any concerns to the manager, particularly with regards to Health and Safety.

**CCB Agrees:**

1. To take such steps as necessary to prevent harm to the home worker, or to anyone else who may be affected by their work, following a risk assessment and to ensure that systems are set up and maintained to provide as safe and secure working environment as practicable.
2. To keep an up-to-date inventory of all equipment supplied to the home worker.
3. To conduct regular supervision meetings with the home worker.
4. To ensure that there is appropriate communication processes in place to support the home worker.

**Equipment and Facilities**

## IT Equipment

- The Manger will source the most appropriate equipment in each case, based on the requirements for the role. CBB will not provide or maintain broadband connections. *A monthly contribution to broadband may be made by CCB through payroll, if the home worker arrangement is for business reasons and this is confirmed in writing by CCB. If the agreement has arisen as a result of a personal request no contribution to broadband will be payable.*
- Should the home worker leave CCB, it is the home worker's responsibility to ensure the safe return of IT equipment supplied

## Mobile Telephones

- Mobile telephones are issued to the home worker by agreement with the home worker's line manager.
- When the home worker's contract ends, it is the responsibility of the home worker /line manager to ensure the safe return the mobile telephone and return it to CCB.
- Should any problems arise with the mobile telephone, the home worker should inform CCB in the first instance.
- Any personal calls should be accounted for and the necessary reimbursement made in accordance with CCB policy

## General

- CCB are only responsible for equipment supplied by CCB.
- Home workers will not be liable for the cost of damage to or loss of the Company's equipment in their home or whilst working on CCB' business, unless there is evidence of deliberate misuse.
- If CCB deem that their property has been misused or not adequately cared for, they can hold the home worker responsible and expect them to cover the costs.
- Any provision of equipment and facilities will be subject to appropriate assessment and validation.
- Any additional home expenses such as heating and lighting, which are incurred as a result of working from home, will not be reimbursed by CCB.
- Should the home worker be suspended from duties, CCB reserve the right to prohibit access to CCB's email and Intranet. The home worker should not use any equipment supplied by CCB during this period.



**Exclusion of liability**

- CCB accepts no liability (to the extent permitted by law) for any ‘wear & tear’ to the home as a result of using the premises for work purposes.

**Insurance and Taxation**

- It is the responsibility of the home worker to ensure that their home insurance is relevant for using their home as an office.
- It is the responsibility of the home worker to ensure that, by working from home, they are not negating the conditions of their own home insurance or breaching conditions imposed on them by landlords or mortgage lenders.
- It is the responsibility of the home worker to ensure that the use of their home does not require planning consent for change of use.
- Additionally, staff will need to produce as and when required by CCB, evidence that they hold relevant cover to their insurance, and any other such relevant documents.
- Matters of taxation are ultimately the responsibility of individual employees with HM Revenue & Customs.

Employee Signature

Date

Line Manager Signature

Date

### Suitability of the person to for home working

If the job is suitable for home working then the suitability of the employee needs to be considered as there is a greater emphasis on personal responsibility to achieve outputs and work effectively at home. The following should be considered:

<b>Personal Qualities</b>	<b>Suitable Home Environment</b>
<p>Helpful personal qualities are likely to include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self motivated</li> <li>• Self disciplined</li> <li>• Enjoy the challenge of working on their own</li> <li>• A flexible approach</li> <li>• Able to organise working time effectively</li> <li>• Able to work without direct supervision</li> <li>• Confident to work away from the office environment and some technical competence to manage technology required and deal with minor issues (training provision not withstanding)</li> <li>• Able to work on their own without day to day social interaction with colleagues</li> <li>• Able to travel to meetings and site visits</li> </ul> <p>Able to “switch off” from work and maintain a proper balance between working and non-working hours.</p>	<p>The employee takes personal responsibility for the health and safety aspects of home working and there needs to be an environment at home which offers the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable “office” space, ideally a separate room but at least a dedicated space</li> <li>• Freedom from interruptions and distractions</li> <li>• Security and confidentiality</li> <li>• Ability to satisfy Health and Safety requirements</li> </ul> <p>It is not considered appropriate to combine home based working with dependant care. As such home based working will not be viewed as an alternative to paid dependant care. Employees will be required to demonstrate that they do not have dependant care responsibilities within their contracted hours</p>





6. It is likely that most days will be used for field visits and working elsewhere, including at home, to avoid the workplace distractions.
7. In addition to 10 days paid leave a budget of up to £500 will be available to cover direct costs. The need for this will also have to be identified in the project plan. It will help the proposal if it involves a Board member in either a supporting or tutoring/mentoring capacity.
8. For those who are members of professional bodies this study leave may count towards Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
9. The Chief Officer will consider all requests and give a decision in writing within 10 working days of receiving the request. Any application by the Chief Officer will be considered by the chairman.
10. Each request will be considered on an individual basis taking into account a range of relevant issues including, but not limited to:
  1. Financial implications
  2. Workload implications for colleagues
  3. Impact on quality and level of service provision
  4. Statutory obligations
  5. Potential benefits to both the individual and CCB
11. Employees have the right to appeal if their request to participate in the discretionary scheme has been refused. Appeals should be made in writing to the Chief Officer within 5 working days of receipt of decision. The Chief Officer will arrange for the appeal to be heard by the Personnel Appeals Panel as soon as reasonably possible. The outcome of the appeal hearing will be confirmed in writing and the decision of the appeal hearing is final.
12. Failure to submit a satisfactory report will be taken seriously and will be taken into account as part of the annual appraisal and any recommendation for an annual salary increment.
13. There are no cost implications as the existing training budget will be used. If the absence of a member of staff gives rise to significant additional costs or disruption it is unlikely to be approved.

### **Recommendations**

1. **To approve the introduction of Special Project Study Leave with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.**
2. **That proposals can be submitted from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013.**



consider noise. These are in addition to the county council organised Bucks Compensation and Mitigation Panel, which brings together representatives from all the local community fora.

5. After a long stand off the Buckinghamshire local authorities have agreed to participate in a Planning Forum for the county co-organised with HS2 Ltd. The Board is a member of this forum together with all the local authorities in Bucks and those affected in Herts (Ian Reay represented Herts at the first meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November). HS2 Ltd, despite stating from the outset that the Board would be involved attempted to sideline the Board prior to the meeting, but this was rejected by the local authorities which reiterated their desire for the Board to be involved. HS2 Ltd tried claiming the Board should not be a member as it did not have any relevant planning or highway powers.
6. A meeting was held with HS2 Ltd to specifically discuss design and mitigation options for the section from Mantles Wood near Hyde Heath to Wendover. The only two options to mitigate noise are fences and earth bunds. To be effective noise fences would have to be up to 8 metres high to screen both wheels and pantographs, which are the main sources of noise. They would be intrusive, ugly and largely ineffective for sections on embankments and viaducts. The alternative is use of spoil to create earth bunds along side the track. In most, but not all, locations this would be an artificial and ugly feature which would require significant volumes of spoil and large areas of land to make it look anywhere natural. HS2 Ltd favour this approach because it is both low cost and will help them dispose of the spoil with minimum transport costs.
7. The meeting once again voiced its desire for a bored tunnel to avoid these problems. If that wasn't possible it wished the track to be lowered so that cuttings would be deeper.

### **Tunnel Options**

8. The Board has already issued a position statement on mitigation based on a preference for a full-length bored tunnel. A lower preference which may be acceptable if the full length tunnel was finally ruled out, is a tunnel with a gap. Based on EU guidance it is likely a gap of 500 metres would be required no more than 20 kilometres from a tunnel portal. Currently no safety study has been commissioned so its requirement is not confirmed.
9. Local groups, aided by Ray Payne, have identified a design with a gap at Durham Farm in Wendover Dene. Although this would cause some loss of valued features and significant local disruption the final design would leave a gap largely out of sight of nearly all nearby properties and public vantage points. With sensitive landscaping the gap and associated structures could be reasonably well accommodated. All

impacts are relative, but this option would be very much better than the design currently proposed.

10. Attached is Ray Payne's analysis of the options (Appendix 1).
11. It is proposed that the Board adds to its earlier statement on mitigation by re-iterating that the best option is a full length bored tunnel without surface intervention (other than vents) but, if that is not deemed realistic for political, financial, technical or legal reasons, then a tunnel with a 500 metre gap at Durham Farm, with appropriate design and landscaping, would be acceptable. This would bring the Board closer to the view increasingly being taken by local groups and councils.
12. As there is still the possibility of significant delay due to legal challenges and subsequent review of the design and precise alignment, the option of a full-length bored tunnel should not be discounted entirely, yet.

### **Recommendation**

1. **The Board should be willing to support a tunnel with a gap of 500 metres at Durham Farm, with appropriate design and landscaping to minimise the environmental impacts.**



**Item 14****Update on Ash Die-back**

**Author:** Steve Rodrick Chief Officer

**Summary:** The most recent survey has shown Ash dieback has now been found at over 250 sites throughout the UK. To date there are no confirmed outbreaks in the Chilterns but this more likely to be because it has not been found rather than it not being here.

The latest Govt. response is attached as Appendix 1.

Ideas are already well developed on recording and celebrating the importance of Ash in the British landscape.

**Purpose of Report** To provide the committee with latest information on the outbreak.

**Latest Information**

1. Surveys lead by the Forestry Commission is continuing and confirmed outbreaks now exceed 250 with sites being identified across the country including Scotland and Northern Ireland. Some are the result of diseased planting stock and more are based on outbreaks in the wild. There are no confirmed outbreaks in the Chilterns but there is one near Marlow. It is highly likely to be in the Chilterns already but just not identified. If not here yet, it will arrive with near certainty next year.
2. It is now thought that it arrived via windblown spores in Kent up to 4 or 5 years ago. Its pattern of spread is not yet well understood and research is now going on to learn the lessons, in so far as they can be, from experience in Poland, Germany, France and Scandinavia.
3. Whilst some efforts to slow its spread may be effective the likelihood is that it will cover the entire country within a few years. The challenge is to develop a strategy to; record Ash as it is found now; develop woodland regeneration initiatives; and an associated programme to identify disease resistance stock to be used for future regeneration programmes.
4. Next Steps in the Chilterns;
  1. To encourage monitoring and reporting of outbreaks.
  2. To assess the extent of ash (there may be 10 million of more ash trees in the Chilterns).

3. To identify important individual ash trees.
  4. To identify likely impacts of managing diseased trees.
  5. To record the heritage of ash (for example it was used in the Chilterns to make tennis rackets and aircraft frames).
  6. To consider options for regeneration including alternative species.
  7. To consider the necessary conditions to regenerate diseased woods i.e. need for pest control to assist natural regeneration of other species such as beech.
5. The Government's latest plan is attached as Appendix 1

### **Recommendations**

1. **To note the latest information showing the spread of ash.**
2. **The Board takes a lead in developing a strategy for the Chilterns.**
3. **In principle the Board contributes staff time and funding to local, regional and national initiatives to record the heritage of ash.**

## Appendix 1

# Defra Action Plan

## Summary

This plan sets out actions to tackle *Chalara fraxinea* over the next few months.

The key actions are:

### **Objective 1 - reducing the rate of spread**

- Maintain the ban on import and movement of ash trees
- Explore options for a targeted approach to management of infected trees by end March 2013
- Initiate research on spore production at infected sites
- Work with partners to publish targeted advice on movement of leaf litter

### **Objective 2 – developing resistance**

- Work across Europe to share data and experience on resistance to Chalara
- Work with research councils and other bodies in the UK to identify and prioritise research needs on resistance and ensure those needs are met.

### **Objective 3 – encouraging citizen, landowner and industry engagement in surveillance, monitoring and action in tackling the problem**

- Fund a pilot study to accelerate the development of the ObservaTREE, a tree health early warning system using volunteer groups
- Develop a plant health network of trained people to support official surveillance and detection
- Support work by industry groups to develop a charter mark for plants of UK origin
- Continue to work with the OPAL consortium to develop the OPAL survey on tree health for launch in May 2013
- Support a biosecurity themed show garden at next year's Chelsea Flower Show

### **Objective 4 – building resilience in woodland and associated industries**

- Publish silvicultural guidance on adapting to Chalara
- Publish maps showing the distribution of important ash across Great Britain
- Work with the horticulture and nursery sectors on long-term resilience to the impact of Chalara and other plant health threats

6.12.2012