

Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **11th September 2018**

Title: **Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 Consultation Draft**

Portfolio Area: **Customer First**

Wards Affected: **Tavistock, Buckland Monachorum, Walkham, Bere Ferrers, Tamarside, Milton Ford**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Overview and Scrutiny

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken:
(e.g. referral on of recommendation or implementation of substantive decision)

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Recommendations: That the Hub Committee:

1. Notes the content of the Consultation Draft of the Management Plan and Members send any comments to the author of the report for incorporation into a formal Council consultation response before the end of October 2018.
2. Delegates to the CoP Lead for Place Making the final content of the formal Council consultation response.
3. Notes that the final version of the Management Plan for 2019-2024 will be brought to Hub Committee for adoption in early 2019.

1. **Executive summary**

- 1.1 The report outlines the process of the review of the Management Plan for the Tamar Valley AONB, the issues identified for consideration within the Plan review, and details the method by which Members can contribute to the formal consultation response by the Council, with a view to bringing the final Plan to Hub Committee for adoption in early 2019.

2. Background

- 2.1 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), it is a statutory requirement for Local Authorities to produce Management Plans for AONBs in their area, and to review adopted plans at periods of not more than five years. The previous plan for the Tamar Valley AONB was adopted in 2014 for the period until 2019, and is now due its statutory five year review.
- 2.2 The Borough Council as well as the other three relevant Local Authorities has delegated the authority to review the Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan for the next five years to the Tamar Valley AONB team.
- 2.3 The reviewed Management Plan must be sent to the Secretary of State by March 2019. Defra considers that previous Guidance documents on AONB Management Plans are still fit for purpose but, together with Natural England and the National Association for AONBs, had produced a paper outlining the collective steer to AONB Partnerships in taking forward the next round of Management Plans.
- 2.4 A 'light touch' approach has been promoted building on the common format, structure and timetable agreed between the AONBs, with a view to reflecting changes in the statutory and legislative background, changing circumstances and resources, new knowledge and agendas, and lessons learned from implementation of previous Plans.
- 2.5 The consultation draft of the Management Plan is out for formal consultation for a 12 week period between late August and late November, with a view to seeking adoption by the relevant Local Authorities in early 2019. Member comments are requested before the end of October 2018 to be incorporated into a formal Borough Council response to the consultation draft to be submitted to the AONB team by the end of November.

3 Updates and changes in the Management Plan review

- 3.1 The Consultation Draft of the Management Plan adopts the common format and structure agreed for all the reviewed AONB Management Plans with strategic themes for 'Place, People and Prosperity, and Communication and Management.' From these themes flow a range of considerations (e.g. Landscape character, Historic environment, Communities and culture) each with their own objectives, policies and priorities for action.
- 3.2 Some of the issues identified for consideration within the Plan review are:
 - The changes to the planning landscape with the recently revised National Planning Policy Framework (2018), and changes to the status of relevant Local Plans since 2014 (namely the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan, and Cornwall Local Plan which was adopted in 2016), and the implications for existing and new planning policies for the AONB.

- Reconciling ambitions for renewable energy installations with impact on the character of the AONB.
- Neighbourhood Plans and the balance of meeting community needs whilst protecting landscape character from cumulative impacts of incremental small-scale development.
- Incorporation of learning from being a partner in the Interreg project 'Cordiale', and community involvement in stimulating a wood fuel market consistent with the landscape protection objectives of the designation.
- Changing circumstances and reduced resources for implementation, and a degree of short-midterm uncertainty in terms of threats/opportunities (e.g. the ongoing national Review of Protected Landscapes, Brexit).
- Interactions of AONBs with the public health and wellbeing agenda and the recently published 25 Year Environment Plan (2018).

4 **Proposed Way Forward**

- 4.1 Comments from Members and relevant officers (namely from the Place Making and Development Management CoPs) are being sought before the end of October. It is noted that the content of the Management Plan is wide ranging, and touches upon all of the Council's Themes and Priorities to varying degrees. It is proposed that the CoP Lead for Place Making will have delegated authority to agree the final content of the formal Council response to the Consultation Draft of the Management Plan.
- 4.2 Officers will assist the TVAONB team with review of consultation responses as appropriate during December 2018. The final Management Plan will be presented to the TVAONB Executive and Partnership Committees for agreement in late 2018/beginning of 2019.
- 4.3 The final Management Plan will be presented to the Borough Council Hub Committee in Jan/Feb 2019 for adoption, and will follow due procedure at the other relevant Local Authorities, with a view to sending the new Management Plan to the Secretary of State in March 2019.

5 **Implications**

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance		Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW Act, 2000) sets out the statutory requirement for Local Authorities to produce Management Plans for AONBs in their area, and to

		<p>review adopted plans at periods of not more than five years</p> <p>The Council (as well as other constituent Local Authorities – these being Cornwall Council, Devon County Council, and South Hams District Council) has delegated the authority of reviewing the Management Plan to the Tamar Valley AONB team.</p>
Financial		<p>The Council makes an annual contribution of £8,835 to the Tamar Valley AONB, which along with constituent Local Authority contributions amounts to 25% of the budget, a further 75% being provided by Defra.</p> <p>This contribution meets the cost of the core AONB team and their production and delivery of the AONB Management Plan.</p>
Risk		<p>Failure to publish a plan and submit to the Secretary of State by end of March 2019 would result in the Council failing to meet the statutory duty set out in Section 89 of the CRoW Act.</p>
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		None identified
Safeguarding		None identified
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		None identified
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		None identified
Other implications		None identified

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Consultation Draft of the Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan is expected to be available from www.tamarvalley.org.uk from 7th September.