

Single Member Cabinet Decision**Executive
Forward Plan
Reference****E3127****Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2019 – 2024
and Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023**

Decision maker/s	Cllr Bob Goodman, Cabinet Member for Development and Neighbourhoods
The Issue	Under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 local authorities and Conservation Boards (where applicable) are required to produce Management Plans for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) within their boundaries and to review them at least every 5 years. These plans describe in more detail how the AONBs will be protected to maintain their special character. The existing Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan has been reviewed by the AONB Partnership on behalf of partner authorities and rolled forward for the period 2019-2024. The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan has been reviewed by the Cotswolds Conservation Board and rolled forward to the period 2018 – 2023.
Decision Date	On or after 24 th February 2019
The decision	The Cabinet Member agrees that B&NES i) Adopt the Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan 2019 – 2024 as the basis for safeguarding and managing the unique beauty and distinctive character of the AONB. ii) Do not endorse the Cotswold AONB Management Plan 2018-2023 at this time given that the Management Plan's stated ambition to promote the case to be designated as England's next National Park has not been properly assessed and is not adequately justified.
Rationale for decision	The adoption of a Management Plan for the Mendips Hills AONB is a statutory requirement to meet the Council's duty under the CRoW Act. Whilst not endorsing the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan, the Council will still fulfil its duties under the provisions of Section 85 of the CRoW Act for local authorities to have regard to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB when carrying out their operations and statutory duties within the AONB. The Council will continue to acknowledge the Plan as a material consideration when determining planning applications and drafting planning policy.
Financial and budget implications	The Council make an annual contribution to the Mendip Hills AONB Partnership, through a Statement of Intent between the local authority partners and Defra. The Council's contribution for 2019/20 is £5000. The Council make an annual contribution to the Cotswolds Conservation Board through an agreement between the local authority partners and the Board. The Council's contribution approved for 2019/20 is £6256.

	Approval of the Mendip Hills AONB Management Plans and not endorsing the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan will not incur any additional expenditure.
Issues considered (these are covered in more detail in the report)	Other Legal Considerations
Consultation undertaken	<p>Consultation on draft AONB Management Plans: Ward Councillor; Parish Council; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies.</p> <p>In preparing the Single Member Decision Report consultation was undertaken with the Section 151 Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, and other constituent local authorities within the Cotswolds AONB.</p>
How consultation was carried out	<p>Consultation on draft plans for both the Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan and Cotswold AONB Management Plan has been undertaken with all statutory stakeholders and the wider public and is documented and recorded by the AONB Mendip Hills Partnership and Cotswold Conservation Board.</p> <p>The section 151 officer and the monitoring officer have been consulted on the SMD Report.</p>
Other options considered	Failure to approve and have a Management Plan in place for the Mendip Hills AONB will leave the Council in breach of its statutory duty under the CRoW Act.
Declaration of interest by Cabinet Member(s) for decision, including any dispensation granted:	<i>The nature of interest and whether interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or an-other interest, including any conflict of interest, (as defined in Part 2, A and B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests). Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of their staff before taking the decision.</i>
Any conflict of interest declared by anyone who is consulted by a Member taking the decision:	
Signatures of Decision Makers	

Date of Signature	
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Subject to Call-in until 5 Working days have elapsed following publication of the decision
