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| Council name | COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL |
| Name and date of Committee | CABINET – 7 MARCH 2022 |
| Report Number | AGENDA ITEM 10 |
| Subject | GLOVER REVIEW OF PROTECTED LANDSCAPES - CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT REPORT |
| Wards affected | ALL |
| Accountable member | CLlr Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing Email: juliet.layton@cotswold.gov.uk |
| Accountable officer | Sophia Price Email: sophia.price@cotswold.gov.uk |
| Summary/Purpose | To note the report and proposed consultation response to the government's formal consultation. |
| Annexes | Annex A. Consultation questions and proposed Cotswold DC responses to the questions. |
| Recommendation/s | <i>a. To approve Annex A for submission to Government as the Council's response to the consultation on the Government response to the Glover Review.</i> <i>b. To give delegated authority to the Chief Executive to make minor alterations to the responses in Annex A in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing</i> |
| Corporate priorities | Within the consultation response attention has been drawn to meeting the challenges of the climate and ecological emergencies as well as supporting our local businesses and communities. |
| Key Decision | NO |
| Exempt | NO |
| Consultees/ Consultation | A range of Officers, including the CDC CEO have been consulted on this report. No public consultation has taken place, however members of the public can respond directly to the Government's consultation at https://consult.defra.gov.uk/future-landscapes-strategy/government-response-to-the-landscapes-review/ |



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** In January 2018 the government published a 25 year “Plan for the Environment”¹. It set out an approach to protect landscapes and habitats in England and committed to undertaking a review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). This Review, led by Julian Glover, published its final report² in 2019 and included 27 wide-ranging proposals.
- 1.2** Cotswold District Council submitted evidence to the Glover Review at the end of 2018.
- 1.3** The government has now published their response³ to the Glover Review and has invited consultation responses to that response from local authorities and other interested parties. The deadline is 9th April 2022 and the consultation is in the form of a list of set questions⁴.
- 1.4** The term “protected landscapes” covers both National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The latter being most relevant to the Cotswolds.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1** In the introduction to the document Lord Benyon sets out the Government's vision for protected landscapes -

‘A coherent national network of beautiful, nature-rich spaces that all parts of society can easily access and enjoy. Protected landscapes will support thriving local communities and economies, improve our public health and wellbeing, drive forward nature recovery, and build our resilience to climate change.’

- 2.2** The Government's response describes some of the actions that it has already taken since the Glover Review was published, such as the "Farming in Protected Landscapes" programme, which funds “nature recovery, mitigation of the impacts of climate change, provision of opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand landscape and cultural heritage, and support for nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses”. The Cotswolds National Landscape (Cotswolds Conservation Board) has allocated approximately £300,000 of that funding to the Cotswold District part of the AONB (December 2021)
- 2.3** A draft consultation response is provided at Annex A. Many of the government’s responses align with Cotswold District Council’s corporate priorities such as addressing the climate and ecological emergencies; supporting local communities and improving health and well-being.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs-government-response/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs-government-response>

⁴ <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/future-landscapes-strategy/government-response-to-the-landscapes-review/>



- 2.4** The Government's response includes reference to amending the purposes of protected landscapes. The current purposes for the Cotswolds Conservation Board are already more comprehensive than that for other AONBs (other than the Chilterns),

The two key purposes of the Cotswolds Conservation Board are to –

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds AONB
- increase understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB, ensuring that these complement the conservation and enhancement of the area

In fulfilling these roles, the Board seeks to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities within the AONB.

- 2.5** The government has suggested that the statutory purposes for protected landscapes should be expanded to encompass nature recovery, biodiversity and natural capital (Questions 6-7 Annex A); as well as increasing access and improving health and well-being (Questions 10-12 Annex A). Feedback is also requested on what other issues should be covered within the statutory purposes. The consultation response (Annex A) sets out a broad agreement with enhancing the statutory purposes for protected landscapes.

- 2.6** A section of the report covers agriculture and farming and in particular the emerging new agri-environment support payments, which focus more on paying farmers and land-owners for delivering public goods, such as environmental and ecological enhancements than previous schemes.

- 2.7** Other issues covered in the Government's response and the consultation questions (Annex A) include –

- Changes to the powers of National Park Boards to deal with visitor pressures
- The role of AONB teams in the planning process
- The governance and training of National Park and Conservation Boards
- The strengthening of statutory duties for public bodies with respect to protected landscapes
- The role and status of protected landscape management plans

- 2.8** The government's response is silent on the issue of whether the Cotswolds should become a National Park or not. There is no specific mention in the report of the Cotswolds AONB. The consultation response therefore asks the government to provide clarity that this issue is not being pursued.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications at this stage.



4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications at this stage.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

There are no risks associated with this report.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT (IF REQUIRED)

Given that this report is to approve a consultation response there are no equalities impacts.

7. ECOLOGICAL AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY IMPLICATIONS (IF REQUIRED)

The consultation raises issues related to the ecological and climate emergencies and these are included within the responses to the government's questions.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The only alternative is not to respond to this consultation.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

(END)