

<b>Mrs Urquhart, Cabinet Member for Environment</b>	<b>Ref No: Env01 18/19</b>
<b>May 2019</b>	<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Adoption of the Chichester Harbour Management Plan 2019 - 2024</b>	<b>Part I</b>
<b>Report by Lee Harris, Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment and Matt Davey, Director of Highways and Transport</b>	<b>Electoral Division(s): Bourne The Witterings Chichester West Chichester South</b>
<p><b>Summary:</b></p> <p>The Chichester Harbour Conservancy was established in 1971 with the function to protect the interests of navigation and the conservation of nature. Since 2000, relevant local authorities have been required to publish a Statutory Management Plan every 5-years for each AONB within their jurisdiction. Chichester Harbour Conservancy, on behalf of Hampshire County Council, West Sussex County Council, Chichester District Council and Havant Borough Council, has produced various Chichester Harbour Management Plans that provide a framework for action to help look after and manage this protected landscape.</p> <p>There is a legal duty that requires adopted and published management plans to be reviewed at 5-year intervals. This report concerns the third review of the Chichester Harbour Management Plan 2019 – 2024 that establishes a new long-term Vision to 2050 and reaffirms the special qualities of the AONB.</p> <p>The plan has been developed in consultation with WSCC and other affected local authorities during 2018 and the Harbour Conservancy is presenting the revised plan for formal adoption.</p>	
<p><b>West Sussex Plan: Policy Impact and Context</b></p> <p>The adoption of the Management Plan directly relates to the delivery of the 'A place of culture, heritage and beauty' outcome under the 'A Strong, Safe and Sustainable Place' priority in the West Sussex Plan. One of the key performance indicators is to maintain up to date management plans.</p>	
<p><b>Financial Impact</b></p> <p>Financial contributions to the Chichester Harbour Conservancy are by precept from West Sussex CC and Hampshire CC and by grant from Department for Food and Rural Affairs. Precepts are agreed by the Harbour Conservancy. There are no additional financial implications as a result of the adoption of the Chichester Harbour Management Plan 2019-24.</p>	

## Recommendation

That the Cabinet Member for Environment approves the adoption of the Chichester Harbour Management Plan 2019 – 2024.

### Proposal

#### 1. Background and Context

- 1.1. An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is an area of countryside designated by the Government to protect the outstanding beauty of its landscape for people now and in the future, and for the wildlife that depends on its distinctive character.
- 1.2. The Chichester Harbour Conservancy was established in 1971 by the Chichester Harbour Conservancy Act. It is the only Statutory Harbour Authority with responsibility for an AONB and operates an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy.
- 1.3. Chichester Harbour meets the criteria as an AONB because it has a number of defining components of character, known as special qualities. These are:
  - The unique blend of land and sea – especially the combination of expanses of open waters, narrow inlets and intimate creeks.
  - The frequently wooded shoreline.
  - The flatness of the landform, unusual among AONBs, accentuates the significance of sea and tide and of distant landmarks across land and water.
  - The open water of the central area of the Harbour.
  - The overall sense of wilderness within the seascape.
  - The particularly strong historic environment and heritage assets.
  - The picturesque harbourside settlements.
  - The wealth of flora and fauna, and notably the vast flocks of wading birds add to the richness and diversity of the landscape.
  - The unspoilt character and unobtrusive beauty.
  - The very special sense of peace and tranquillity largely engendered by the gentle way the AONB is used and closeness to nature that is experienced.
- 1.4. AONB Management Plans are statutory documents. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 requires local authorities with land in an AONB to prepare and publish an up-to-date plan that *'formulates their policy for the management of the area and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it'*. Where AONBs cross administrative boundaries, local authorities are required to act jointly to prepare the plan.
- 1.5. The Chichester Harbour Conservancy is managed via a Statutory Advisory Committee of local stakeholders and a Statutory Board comprising local councillors and representatives of the Statutory Advisory Committee.
- 1.6. There is also a legal duty that requires adopted and published management plans to be reviewed at intervals of not more than five years. Accordingly, the third review of the Management Plan covers the period 2019-2024. Consultation on a draft plan took place in summer 2018. Having been approved by the Statutory Board, the Conservancy is asking that individual local authorities adopt the new Plan (Appendix A) during April 2019.

## 2. Management Plan

- 2.1. Management Plans are locally-owned and democratically-accountable strategies, based on evidence, for looking after the AONB in the interests of both people and nature. They are formulated to coordinate policy, investment and action in these nationally-important landscapes in order to achieve the legal purpose of '*conserving and enhancing natural beauty*' for the benefit of current and future generations.
- 2.2. The Conservancy engaged with many local people during the preparation of this Management Plan. Public consultation extended for a period of two months and copies of the draft plan were made available at all the local libraries and at the four Local Authorities. Also, over 150 stakeholder groups were contacted and was part of email newsletters, circulated to over 3,200 people. Finally, open meetings took place around the Harbour, when members of the public could engage directly.
- 2.3. The Plan (Appendix A) sets an overall vision for Chichester Harbour which states that in 2050, the nationally and internationally important landscape and setting of Chichester Harbour is conserved and enhanced. In more detail this means:
  - The special qualities of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are appreciated and enjoyed by local people and visitors who care for the Harbour now and in the future.
  - Management is balanced by ongoing mutual respect shown by different user groups and all within the natural limits of the Harbour.
  - The diverse habitats and excellent water quality benefit the rich array of wildlife, which use the Harbour in harmony with the recreational activities of sailing, walking, cycling and relaxing.
  - People understand and value their surroundings with many opportunities for outdoor education.
  - Businesses thrive with marine enterprises, farmers and tourism providers positively contributing towards a prosperous local economy whilst safeguarding the natural and historic environment.
  - Chichester Harbour will be a resilient landscape, where local communities and businesses are prepared and able to adapt to future challenges.
- 2.4. The Management Plan identifies 15 policies that relate to the special qualities and to the aims and objectives of the Plan. They are intended as the agreed way in which the Harbour will be managed and are supported by actions that are to be taken by the Conservancy and by other stakeholders.
- 2.5. The Plan also has a section on planning principles. The Harbour Conservancy has developed 18 Planning Principles which are designed to interpret and supplement the adopted policies of the Local Planning Authority. In the case of West Sussex this is Chichester District Council, and these are therefore largely a matter for them to consider. That said PP18 does cover access and, in particular, improved sustainable transport facilities, which supports the West Sussex Local Transport Plan and supporting documents.

## **Factors taken into account**

### **3. Consultation**

- 3.1. Relevant internal services have been consulted during the preparation of the Management Plan and appropriate changes have been made as requested.
- 3.2. The County Council's representatives on the Statutory Board have been consulted during the preparation of the Management Plan.

### **4. Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no additional financial or resource implications for the adoption of the Chichester Harbour Conservancy Management Plan 2019-24. WSCC makes a financial contribution to the Harbour Conservancy via precept. For the financial year 2019/20 this stands at £197,250.

### **5. Legal Implications**

AONB Management Plans are statutory documents. Sections 89 and 90 of the CROW Act create a statutory duty on all local authorities with land within an AONB to prepare a management plan that *'formulates their policy for the management of their area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it'*, and thereafter to review adopted and published management plans at intervals of not more than five years. Where an AONB involves more than one local authority, they are required to do this *'acting jointly'*.

### **6. Risk Assessment Implications and Mitigations**

There are no risks associated with the adoption of the Management Plan.

### **7. Other Options Considered**

There is a duty on the constituent local authorities to review adopted and published management plans at intervals of not more than five years. Therefore, no other options have been considered.

### **8. Equality and Human Rights Assessment**

An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken by the Chichester Harbour Conservancy to inform the preparation of the Management Plan Review and is included in the Independent Assessment (Appendix B).

### **9. Social Value and Sustainability Assessment**

A Sustainability Appraisal (included in the Independent Assessment) and a Habitats Regulations Assessment were undertaken by the Chichester Harbour Conservancy to inform the preparation of the Management Plan and are at Appendix B and C.

### **10. Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessment**

Not applicable.

**Lee Harris**  
Executive Director Economy,  
Infrastructure & Environment

**Matt Davey**  
Director of Highways and  
Transport

**Contact:** Andy Ekinsmyth, Head of Transport and Countryside,  
033 022 26687

**Appendices**

Appendix A Chichester Harbour Management Plan 2019 – 2024

Appendix B Independent Assessment of the Chichester Harbour Management  
Plan 2019 - 2024

Appendix C Annex to Habitat Regulations Assessment

**Background Papers** - none