**Item 8**

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**Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Board**

7 December 2022

**Working Groups**

**Purpose of the report:**

To agree the arrangements for Working Groups

**Recommendations:**

1. Agree the refreshed Terms of Reference and appointment of Chairs

1. **Introduction**

1.1 The Surrey Hills Constitution (clause 40) identifies the need to establish Working Groups to progress issues identified in the Surrey Hills Management Plan through collaboration. The refreshed Terms of Reference for the Working Groups is set out in Appendix 1.

1.2 It is proposed to take forward the following groups:

 Promoted Routes

 Mountain Biking

 Byways

**2. Promoted Routes Working Group**

2.1 The Surrey Hills is one of the most popular areas for walking, cycling and horse riding in southern England, with many visitors from south London. The purpose of this group is to develop, interpret and market a network of Promoted Routes to ensure a wide range of our wider community (residents and visitors) can access, understand and enjoy the Surrey Hills as a National Landscape in a responsible and sustainable way that benefits their health and wellbeing.

2.2 It is proposed that Gordon Jackson Chairs the Group. As Chair of the Surrey Hills Society, Gordon and his volunteers have vast experience in promoting access to the Surrey Hills, leading walks and events, publishing leaflets and is actively recruiting and training volunteers to monitor and adopt trails.

2.3 The proposed membership is:

Landowners and land managers (National Trust, Surrey CC, CLA/ NFU)

 Community (Surrey Association of Local Councils)

Business (Surrey Hills Enterprises)

 Walking (Ramblers Association)

Cycling (Cycling UK, Mole Valley Cycle Forum)

Equestrian (BHS)

Conservation (Natural England)

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (Surrey Coalition, SMEF)

Volunteering (Surrey Hills Society)

Surrey Countryside Access Forum

 Active Travel (Community Rail Partnership, Active Surrey)

**3. Mountain Bike Working Group**

3.1 The Surrey Hills is one of the most popular destinations for mountain biking in the country. The purpose of this groups is to seek to support landowners and land managers in the management of mountain biking to help reduce liability by engaging the mountain bike community to be trained to create safer trails that reduce conflict and the damage to habitats.

3.2 The CLA has nominated Tim Metson to Chair the group. Tim is a member of the Surrey CLA Committee, a Director of Surrey Hills Enterprises, landowner that includes the BKB trail and a Chartered Surveyor.

3.3 The proposed membership is:

 Landowners and land managers (National Trust, Friends of the Hurtwood, Wootton Estate, Forestry England, SCC)

 Community (Surrey Association of Local Councils)

Business (Surrey Hills Enterprises, Specialized, Trail Academy)

 Mountain Biker(s)

Conservation (Natural England)

**3. Byways Working Group**

3.1 The environmental damage and disturbance caused by off-road motorised vehicles in the countryside was highlighted as a major concern in the Surrey Hills Management Plan. The purpose of the group is to promote the responsible use of byways by all users and to advise on the management of BOATS to reduce user conflict and environmental damage.

3.2 It is proposed that Kristina Kenworthy chairs the group. In her role on CPRE and as a solicitor, Kristina has a long standing interest and expertise in these matters.

3.3 The proposed membership includes:

Landowner/manager (Surrey County Council, Forestry England)

User Groups (Trail Riders Fellowship, Horse Drawn Carriage Drivers/Rider, Surrey Green Lane Association, All Terrain UK)

Policing and enforcement (Surrey Police, Surrey County Council

 Natural England)

Surrey Countryside Access Forum

Community (Surrey Association of Local Councils, resident rep)

**4. Next steps:**

To work with the Chairs and support officers to agree schedule of meetings in 2023.

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**Sources/background papers:**

* The Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan (2020 – 2025) https://www.surreyhills.org/board/our-management-plan/

**Appendix 1**

**Surrey Hills Board Working Groups - Terms of Reference**

1. **Purpose**
	1. To share and develop best practice on the priorities identified in the Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan 2020 - 2025.
2. **Membership**
	1. The Chair will be appointed by the Surrey Hills Board. Membership of each Working Group will be at the discretion of the Chair in consultation with the Surrey Hills Board Chair and Director
	2. The members will contribute to the Group based on their knowledge, skills and experience. Members will represent their organization and will only need to attend if they can contribute to that meeting.

**2 Responsibilities**

2.1 The Working Group will be expected to identify issues to discuss and to share best practice. The Group will examine any issues relating to management, development, administration and publicity relating in pursuance of the purpose of the Group.

2.2 The Chair will represent and advise the Surrey Hills Board on these matters.

2.3 The Surrey Hills Team will support the delivery by directing its own resources and coordinating the activities of partners, as appropriate,

**3. Coordination**

3.1 The Surrey Hills Team will allocate a Support Officer to provide administrative and secretariat services relating to the work and meetings of the Group.

3.2 The Support Officer will distribute the agenda and papers for Working Group meetings.