

Written statement of a key decision
Cabinet member environment

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| Title | Wye Valley National Landscapes - acceptance of grant funding |
| Decision maker | Cabinet member environment Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251 |
| Date of decision | 1 August 2025 |
| Report exemption class | Open |
| Reason for being a key decision | <p>This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.</p> <p>This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.</p> |
| A notice was served in accordance with Part 3 (Key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. | |
| General exception or special urgency (as defined in the constitution) | No |
| Purpose | This report seeks approval to accept a number of confirmed and indicative funding awards, allocations and bids from National Grid, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales for the future management and duties of the Wye Valley National Landscape, formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). |
| Decision | <p>That:</p> <p>a) The council accepts the National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI) project grants for 2025-2031 as detailed below, and to deliver the projects as set out in this report across Llangarron; Ross East; Ross West & Kerne Bridge Wards in the Wye Valley</p> |

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| | <p>National Landscape:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the 'Magnificent Meadows, Tremendous Trees and Wonderful Wetlands' award of £296,426 b. the 'Marstow and Pencraig Landscape Connections' award for £248,722 c. The 'Whitchurch to Howle Hill Landscape Enhancements' award for £246,769 <p>b) The council accepts the anticipated funding offer(s) from DEFRA for 2025-26 and 2026-27 for a total of up to £1,663,710 as detailed below, to deliver the work programme agreed by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) as outlined in this report across the Herefordshire part and other counties in the Wye Valley National Landscape, ;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Wye Valley National Landscape Core funding of up to £303,710 (£151,855pa) b. Access for All funding allocation of up to £240,000 (£120,000pa) c. Additional Core Capital funding of up to £320,000 (£160,000pa). d. Farming in Protected Landscape (FiPL) allocation of up to £800,000 (£400,000pa) <p>c) The council accepts the funding offer(s) from Welsh Government for the 2025-27 for a total of up to £988,000, as detailed below, to deliver the work programme agreed by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) as outlined in this report across the Monmouthshire part of Wye Valley National Landscape;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Core Revenue funding of £103,000 (£51,500pa) b. Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) allocation of £190,000 (£95,000pa) c. Sustainable Landscape Sustainable Places (SLSP) allocation of up to £234,000 (£117,000pa) d. General Capital Funding of £156,000 (£78,000pa) e. Ffermio Bro funding of up to £305,000 (£120,000 in 2025/6 & £185,000 in 2026/7). <p>d) The council accepts the funding offer from Natural Resources Wales for 2025-2027 for a total of £98,000 (£49,000pa) Strategic Allocated Funding (SAF) to deliver the projects as set out in this report across the Monmouthshire part of Wye Valley National Landscape.</p> <p>e) The council accepts the funding bid to the Environment Agency for a total of £45,000 in 2025-2026 from the Water Environment Improvement Fund (WEIF) to complement delivery of the National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI) project as set out in this report.</p> <p>f) The council continues to support the Wye Valley National Landscape through a Memorandum of Understanding with the other constituent local authorities, namely Forest of Dean District Council, Gloucestershire County Council and Monmouthshire County Council. OFFICIAL</p> <p>g) The council delegates the review and preparation of the next Wye Valley National Landscape Management Plan to the Wye Valley National Landscape Team.</p> <p>h) The council accepts any additional funding, or variations in the</p> |
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| | <p>above funding, in seeking to further the purpose of the National Landscape designation in 2025-6 and 2026-7.</p> <p>i) The Chief Operating Officer (Resident Services) is authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to implement the schemes.</p> |
| Reason for the decision | <p>As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at</p> <p>http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=50051144</p> |
| Options considered | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not to accept the grant funding- this is not recommended as the council is the accountable body for the Wye Valley National Landscape, has statutory responsibility to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the area of outstanding natural beauty, and will otherwise need to allocate revenue and capital funding to meet these duties. 2. Part accept the grant funding¹ <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Core funding - This is not recommended at this time as the core funding allocations are required to maintain the existing services and contribute to deliver the council's duties to further the conservation and enhancement of the area of outstanding natural beauty. b. Project funding – this is not recommended as this would result in a significant loss of investment in the National Landscape and is not in line with either the Council's strong Climate and Ecological emergency commitments or the delivery of the joint statutory National Landscape Management Plan. |
| Declarations of interest (see below) | |
| Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply) | 7 August 2025 |

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| Councillor: Cabinet member environment (Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst) | Date 1 August 2025 |
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- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;

and

- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted.