

## CABINET

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| <b>Date of Meeting</b> | Tuesday, 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2017            |
| <b>Report Subject</b>  | Halkyn Mountain Sustainable Management Scheme  |
| <b>Cabinet Member</b>  | Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside |
| <b>Report Author</b>   | Chief Officer (Planning & Environment)         |
| <b>Type of Report</b>  | Operational                                    |

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following a successful expression of interest for Halkyn Mountain Common, Welsh Government have invited an application to their Sustainable Management Scheme to address the decline in grazing through appropriate vegetation and stock management. The project will also look to improve the management of recreational activities and encourage activity to highlight the health and well-being benefits of the Common. The submission deadline is 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017. The proposed scheme will run from 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2018 – 31<sup>st</sup> Mar 2021 with a cost of £400,000.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | Members note this collaborative initiative and support the grant application to Welsh Government's Sustainable Management Scheme. |
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## REPORT DETAILS

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| <b>1.00</b> | <b>EXPLAINING THE ISSUES</b>  |
| 1.01        | <p>In 2008 an Integrated Strategy and Action Plan for Halkyn Mountain Common was devised to establish a strategic and integrated approach to managing its unique landscape. The resulting vision of this work was:</p> <p><i>“To manage Halkyn Mountain in an active partnership between all stakeholders so that the whole of the common is effectively grazed to fulfil its ecological potential, the outstanding cultural heritage is conserved and celebrated, the common is enjoyed for informal countryside by local people and visitors, the individual communities are sustainable with an excellent range of services and the common becomes a special and safe place in which to live, work and visit.”</i></p> <p>Since the production of this strategy, the Halkyn Mountain Joint Consultative Board (HMJCB) and organisations such as Flintshire County Council (FCC) and Natural Resource Wales (NRW) have been striving to make this vision a reality.</p> |
| 1.02        | <p>The Sustainable Management Scheme (which is part of the Rural Development Programme, RDP, and is administered by Welsh Government, WG) provides an opportunity to deliver a cohesive package of meaningful activities within a framework designed to be collaborative and inclusive. The purpose of the Sustainable Management Scheme is to support collaborative landscape scale projects taking action to improve the resilience of our natural resources and ecosystems in a way that also delivers benefits to farm businesses and rural communities and provides the mechanism to deliver against the new Environment (Wales) Act and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.</p>   |
| 1.03        | <p>Halkyn Mountain is a unique 800 hectare common, designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), for its wide range of habitats. It has been grazed for centuries and has been heavily mined for lead, leaving fascinating industrial remains strewn across the open landscape. The mountain common is divided between five communities. It is used for recreation, with many local people and visitors coming to experience its unique landscape and wildlife and the stunning views across North-Wales and the Dee Estuary. Management of the mountain is challenging, with issues such as an ageing farming population with few graziers actively implementing their grazing rights. This results in fewer sheep grazing the common and significant scrub encroachment. Recreational pressure, dogs and traffic have contributed to the decline in the number of animals put out to graze.</p>  |
| 1.04        | <p>This collaborative project seeks to address the decline in grazing through appropriate vegetation management on the landscape scale, the installation of cattle grids and management of recreational pressure.</p>   |

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| 1.05 | A project officer will work with stakeholders to deliver key projects. To ensure long term sustainability they will engage with the graziers and endeavour to steer the Common into Glastir or a Management Agreement and halt the declining economic value of the common and invigorate farm businesses. The project officer will also provide opportunities for people from different backgrounds to make a positive difference to wildlife and help community groups to engage in outdoor exercise, improve their mental wellbeing and develop skills to help enrich their lives, leading to more resilient and healthier communities. |
| 1.06 | An expression of interest was submitted January 2017 and was successful. Partners are now asked to submit a full application by 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2017, with proposed project start date 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2018.  |

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| <b>2.00</b>   | <b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>  |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| 2.01  | Total Project Cost: £400,000<br>Total Grant Amount: £285,000  |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| 2.02  | Summary cost breakdown:<br>Project Officer - to be employed by North Wales Wildlife Trust and managed with the Countryside Service.<br><table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">£100,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cattle Grids - contract management by FCC engineers</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£200,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vegetation Management -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£60,000 Led by NRW</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Independent Evaluation -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£10,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Promotion and Awareness Raising -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£15,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project Management, Finance/Admin -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£15,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>£400,000</b></td> </tr> </table>            |                              | £100,000 | Cattle Grids - contract management by FCC engineers | £200,000                        | Vegetation Management -      | £60,000 Led by NRW | Independent Evaluation - | £10,000 | Promotion and Awareness Raising - | £15,000 | Project Management, Finance/Admin - | £15,000 | <b>Total</b> | <b>£400,000</b> |              |        |              |                 |
|   | £100,000  |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Cattle Grids - contract management by FCC engineers | £200,000  |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Vegetation Management -                             | £60,000 Led by NRW  |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Independent Evaluation -                            | £10,000   |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Promotion and Awareness Raising -                   | £15,000   |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Project Management, Finance/Admin -                 | £15,000   |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>£400,000</b>   |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| 2.03  | Summary match funding to be provided by:<br><table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Grosvenor Estate (landowner)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£50,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flintshire County Council</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£15,000 to be met from existing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Countryside Service balances</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Natural Resources Wales</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£30,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cemex Quarry</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£5,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brynford Community Council</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£5,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chester Zoo</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£5,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pet Cemetery</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£5,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>£115,000</b></td> </tr> </table> | Grosvenor Estate (landowner) | £50,000  | Flintshire County Council                           | £15,000 to be met from existing | Countryside Service balances |                    | Natural Resources Wales  | £30,000 | Cemex Quarry                      | £5,000  | Brynford Community Council          | £5,000  | Chester Zoo  | £5,000          | Pet Cemetery | £5,000 | <b>Total</b> | <b>£115,000</b> |
| Grosvenor Estate (landowner)                        | £50,000   |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Flintshire County Council                           | £15,000 to be met from existing   |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Countryside Service balances                        |   |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Natural Resources Wales                             | £30,000   |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Cemex Quarry  | £5,000  |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Brynford Community Council                          | £5,000  |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Chester Zoo   | £5,000  |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| Pet Cemetery  | £5,000  |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>£115,000</b>   |                              |          |   |                                 |                              |                    |                          |         |                                   |         |                                     |         |              |                 |              |        |              |                 |

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| <b>3.00</b> | <b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>   |
| 3.01        | In 2008 the Integrated Strategy and Action Plan for Halkyn Mountain Common was the subject of a comprehensive participatory exercise to secure the views and comments of all individuals and parties with an interest and stake in the future of the common, including the Halkyn |

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|      | Mountain Joint Consultative Board (MHJCB), a group of representatives from organisations which have an interest in Halkyn Mountain Common. The MHJCB'S purpose is to provide a platform for the exchange of views and the discussion of issues of mutual concern thus helping to improve communication between public and private sectors, commoners and graziers, commercial organisations, statutory agencies, conservation and recreational interests who have steered this initiative from the outset. |
| 3.02 | Additional consultation has been carried out with the Graziers Association.  |

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| <b>4.00</b> | <b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>   |
| 4.01        | Failure to attract significant funding to this landscape and developing sustainable management will see a decline in its special habitat qualities and in particular there will be decline in the grazing industry. This will also have an impact on the common, as a lack of management will lead to a reducing resilience to increasing access pressures. Working collaboratively with partners with this funding will provide a long term solution to the management of this landscape. |

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| <b>5.00</b> | <b>APPENDICES</b>  |
| 5.01        | Appendix 1 - Submitted expression of interest – RDP SMS Halkyn Mountain EOI Oct-Nov 16v2 |

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| <b>6.00</b> | <b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>  |
| 6.01        | None<br><b>Contact Officer: Tom Woodall,</b><br><b>Access &amp; Natural Environment Manager</b><br><b>Telephone: 01352 703902</b><br><b>E-mail: tom.woodall@flintshire.gov.uk</b> |

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| <b>7.00</b> | <b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>   |
| 7.01        | <b>Halkyn Mountain Joint Consultative Board</b> - a group of representatives from organisations which have an interest in Halkyn Mountain Common. Its purpose is to provide a platform for the exchange of views and the discussion of issues of mutual concern thus helping to improve communication between public and private sectors, commoners and graziers, commercial organisations, statutory agencies, conservation and recreational interests who have steered this initiative from the outset.<br><br><b>Glastir</b> – a sustainable land management programme, coordinated by Welsh Government, offering support to farmers and land managers. |