

Report to **Resources & Performance Committee**
Date **14 November 2012**
By **Director of Operations & Director of Corporate Services**
Title of Report **SDNPA Vehicle Fleet**
Purpose of Report **To consider the status of the SDNPA vehicle fleet**

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- 1) Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:**
- a. Approve the purchase of three new replacement Land Rovers**
 - b. Approve the purchase of three cars to allow a pilot study to be conducted into pool car use across the Park, to inform the Estates Strategy and future vehicle policy.**
 - c. Approve the sale of the three oldest Land Rovers, the Ford Transit Van and one Nissan Navara.**
 - d. Approve delegation of the pool car model to the Chief Executive.**
 - e. Approve a revised 2012/13 capital budget for Vehicles of £147,500, an increase of £67,500 which will be funded from the earmarked vehicles renewals reserve.**
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1. Introduction

- 1.1** This paper gives the background to the SDNPA fleet and decisions regarding the purchase of operational vehicles and cars.
- 1.2** Operational vehicles for use primarily by the Operations team consist of Land Rovers and pick-up trucks. The table below shows the current fleet numbers. A renewals policy is in place to ensure that annual revenue contributions are made to a vehicles renewals (replacement) reserve to ensure that the Authority has sufficient funding available for replacement of these vehicles from time to time when required.

Vehicles owned at 14/11/12	Number
Land Rover	10
Nissan Navara pick-up trucks	5
Ford Ranger pick up truck	1
Ford Transit Van	1
<i>Total Fleet numbers</i>	<i>17</i>

- 1.3** As well as vehicles for operational purposes, SDNPA Officers undertake many journeys that do not require a large capacity / power vehicle e.g. journeys to partners' offices, between SDNPA offices, to community groups' talks and events. Currently all journeys undertaken for work by Officers are carried out using private vehicles (and mileage claimed back) or operational vehicles. The use of Land Rovers for this type of travel is unsustainable and the SDNPA is seeking to ensure it has the lowest environmental impact possible.
- 1.4** The paper covers the two types of vehicle (operational and wider pool car use) and seeks Members' approval for the purchase of additional Land Rovers to replace end-of-life Land Rovers, and the purchase of three pool cars to improve efficiency and allow a pilot study to be undertaken into the use of such a resource and the needs of the SDNPA longer term. This pilot is part of the Estates Strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1** The subject of vehicle procurement has been taken to various committees during the set up and establishment of the SDNPA:

- In November 2010 the Resources and Performance Committee considered a report by the interim Head of ICT, Premises and Procurement to purchase a fleet of vehicles for the Authority in order that the Ranger service could become fully operational on 1 April 2011.
 - A further report was taken to the SDNPA on 9 December 2010 which looked to fund the purchase of vehicles previously approved by the Resources and Performance Committee.
 - Vehicles have been discussed at a member workshop on the 8 September 2011 and subsequently in numerous Resources and Performance Committees.
- 2.2 Land Rovers and one Ford Ranger owned by the South Downs Joint Committee (SDJC) were transferred to the SDNPA in early 2011. SDJC leased vehicles, made up of pick-up trucks and cars, were not transferred. The SDNPA supplemented the transferred Land Rovers with the purchase of five Nissan Navara pick-up trucks.
- 2.3 Although Members had approved the purchase of five cars at this time, no cars were purchased due to the long lead in time for the selected VW Blue Motion Golf (nine months). It was recommended that an alternative car make be considered which could be delivered more quickly. There was no specific make or model of vehicle specified although it was stated that they had to have strong 'green' credentials.
- 2.4 A joint Resources and Performance and Audit Committee workshop on 8 September 2011 Identified the next steps should be to tender for the cars to be bought, seeking vehicles which are cost-effective, meet the needs of the SDNPA and are demonstrably sustainable.
- 2.5 The 2012/13 capital programme continues to include a budget of £80,000 carried forward initially from 2010/11 to fund the purchase of pool vehicles.
- 2.6 This decision was subsequently reviewed in light of the work required on the Estates Strategy and it was agreed to tie any purchase / leasing of cars into the needs of the Authority as identified within the Estates Strategy. In the meantime, Officers would use their own vehicles or operational vehicles. Now that the review of the estate is complete and work is about to start on the South Downs Centre it is time to refresh the fleet in line with previous SDNPA decisions.
- 3. Land Rovers**
- 3.1 The Land Rovers are the work-horses of the National Park, getting staff, volunteers, tools and equipment to site. They have good carrying capacity and, being four-wheel drive vehicles, can get directly to sites, which are invariably off-road, with maximum efficiency and minimal delay.
- 3.2 A review was conducted of the Operational Areas after the first year of working, to ascertain the most effective vehicle deployment. This concluded that the vehicle fleet mix of Land Rovers, pick-up trucks and cars (still to be acquired) was about right, with some minor changes in allocation. This can be implemented with the proposed replacement / new vehicles.
- 3.3 Most of the Land Rovers are either 2004 or 2005 models, with one much older 1999 model, and have all seen hard service over their working lives. It makes sound sense to replace these vehicles as maintenance costs begin to escalate. It is recommended that the one very old Land Rover is replaced now, along with two of the oldest of the rest (04 reg). This will begin to create a rolling replacement programme and, over the next few years, others can be replaced as circumstances dictate, to spread the age and therefore maintenance requirements of the vehicle fleet.
- 3.4 Thus, three of the existing aging Land Rovers will be sold, to be replaced by three new Land Rovers of the same specification (i.e. station wagons, with maximum seating capacity for volunteers, space for equipment etc).
- 3.5 The Operations review showed a high Land Rover demand in the Wealden area, so one of the Land Rovers will be moved there from the Eastern Area, where an estate car is needed

for improved operational effectiveness, fuel efficiency, more sustainable travel etc. The Western Area team would also benefit from a pool estate car, rather than a current Nissan Navara pick-up, which would be sold.

- 3.6 One consideration for future working is the capacity of the NPA to do its job; for example, with the Volunteering Review, highlighting developing and diversifying the Volunteer Ranger Service, which may require additional vehicles. Also, the issue of vehicle sponsorship deals is being looked at in concert with other NPAs and the South Downs brand may prove attractive here. At this stage, the recommendation is simply to follow the NPA's renewal policy to replace aging Land Rovers.
- 3.7 The estimated cost of replacing three Land Rovers is £90,000.

4 Pool cars

- 4.1 In the course of conducting their jobs, SDNPA Officers and Members travel across the National Park. Many of these journeys do not require a Land Rover or pick-up vehicle and indeed it would be 'greener' to conduct these journeys in a car (though public transport is the first option, this is not practical or possible for many journeys in the Park).
- 4.2 In 2011-12 £78,000 of business miles were claimed by SDNPA Officers and Members. However, this does not represent a normal year, as many staff would not have been in post for the full 12 months. It is anticipated that even with pool cars, some private mileage will still need to be claimed as there will inevitably be occasions when there are insufficient vehicles, but there is a clear expectation that private mileage claims will reduce with the introduction of pool cars to the SDNPA vehicle fleet.
- 4.3 As part of the ongoing work to review the SDNPA estate and to promote cheaper and greener transport options, in line with work progressing on a Sustainability Policy, it is recommended that three pool vehicles are purchased. These vehicles will form the basis of a 12 month pilot study into their usage which will allow the Authority to evaluate the right balance between mileage payments and pool vehicles. Based on initial assessments, it has been estimated that a pool vehicle would have to travel 9,603 miles in a year to break even against the same cost of paying for mileage in private vehicles.
- 4.4 The pilot study would consist of the following:
- One car to be located in Midhurst easily accessible to all HQ and Depot staff;
 - One car to be located at Stanmer Park, for Area, Park-wide and other hot-desking staff;
 - One car to be based at Queen Elizabeth Country Park, to operate more efficiently by swapping it from a 4x4 pick-up vehicle;
 - These cars to be purchased rather than leased, as leasing would tie the Authority in to a set leasing contract and maximum mileage amounts. Purchasing would allow the Authority to resell the cars should this be necessary at the end of the pilot period. In addition, an options appraisal comparison of the 5 year costs of leasing compared to purchasing has identified that purchasing provides best value.
 - Full recording of all journeys will be mandatory to allow the Authority to ascertain usage and mileage to compare this to the alternative costs of private vehicle mileage.
- 4.5 Estate cars are recommended for SDNPA to maximise operational effectiveness, as these will allow the transport of more people and equipment. All-electric cars are very new, untested and there is a lack of charging points across the Park. Petrol cars would be the cheapest option but do not accord with the National Park's obligation to lead by example or with the conclusions of previous NPA discussions that the chosen vehicles should have strong "green credentials". It is therefore recommended that a hybrid car is purchased. Example costs for a range of options are in **Appendix I** but the final choice will depend on how well we can match the capacity of the vehicles to the needs of individual offices, as well as on the discounts that it ought to be possible to negotiate once a clear decision to proceed has been taken. It is therefore proposed that this decision is delegated to the Chief Executive.

- 4.6 The estimated cost of purchasing three hybrid cars, and allowing for appropriate branding, is £90,000.

5 Overview of SDNPA vehicle fleet

- 5.1 If the above recommendations are approved, the SDNPA vehicle fleet would become:

Land Rover	10
Nissan Navara pick-up trucks	4
Ford Ranger pick-up truck	1
Hybrid estate cars	3
<i>Total Fleet numbers</i>	<i>18</i>

- 5.2 Current vehicles that would be sold are three Land Rovers, one Nissan Navara pick up truck and, on relocation to the South Downs Centre, the Ford Transit Van at an estimated total capital receipt of £32,500.
- 5.3 The recommendations within this report result in an increase in fleet size of one vehicle.

6 Resources

- 6.1 The 2012/13 capital programme includes £80,000 for the purchase of vehicles. The total estimated cost of the three Land Rovers (£90,000) and three pool cars (£90,000) net of estimated receipts from sales of used vehicles (£32,500) is £147,500. This will result in an increase in the capital programme of £67,500 which will be funded from the Vehicles renewals reserve.
- 6.2 The Authority maintains a Vehicles renewals reserve which stood at £63,470 on 1 April 2012. On an annual basis officers review vehicle requirements and their estimated useful life in order to determine the level of revenue contributions required to ensure that there is sufficient funding within the earmarked renewals reserve to fund future replacement vehicles. The current revenue budget is £60,000 per annum which covers all operations vehicles. The level of annual contribution to the reserve will need to be reviewed to include pool cars, and will be updated as part of the 2013/14 Budget Strategy.
- 6.3 The 2012/13 revenue budget includes £58,750 for repairs and maintenance, insurance, fuel and licences. It is anticipated that increases in fuel costs will be offset by savings in mileage claims. All other running costs can be absorbed within existing budgets and the renewal of the vehicle fleet proposed in this paper means that the revenue budget for 13/14 can be reduced to £50,000.

7 Risk management

- 7.1 To reduce any risk of accident or malfunction, all vehicles are subject to regular maintenance checks. There is a code of conduct for the use and care of all SDNPA vehicles. Insurance and servicing is arranged by the Estates & Administration team.
- 7.2 Only those properly trained in the use of off-road vehicles are able to drive Land Rovers off-road on SDNPA business.

8 Human Rights, Equalities, Health and Safety

- 8.1 As part of its Health and Safety policy, SDNPA has policies on driving at work and offers off-road driver training to those Officers that require it.
- 8.2 All Officers are required to have a valid driving licence, MOT and car insurance that includes business use, if they are driving for business purposes.

9 External Consultees

- 9.1 None

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Appendix	I. Hybrid Vehicle Costs
SDNPA Consultees	Chief Executive Officer, Director of Corporate Services, Director of Planning, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Head of Operations, Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer & Legal Services.

Appendix I – Hybrid Vehicle costs

- Vauxhall Ampera
 - List Price from £29,995.
 - Load carrying capacity - 300 litres back seats up, 1000 litres back seats down.
 - CO2 - 27g/km.
 - Also gives the highest level of miles on battery power between 25-50 miles.
- Toyota Prius
 - List price from £28,245
 - Load carrying capacity - 443 litres back seats up, 1120 litres back seats down.
 - CO2 - 49g/km.
- Toyota Auris
 - List price from £20,800
 - Load carrying capacity - 233 litres back seats up, 702 litres back seats down.
 - CO2 - 89g/km
- Toyota Yaris
 - List price from £15,195
 - Load carrying capacity - 768 litres back seats down
 - CO2 = 79g/km