

Report to	Resources & Performance Committee
Date	9 April 2013
By	Director of Strategy & Partnerships
Title of Report	New Display Vehicle
Purpose of Report	To gain approval to make a capital purchase of a new display vehicle

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to approve:

- 1) the purchase of a new display vehicle instead of a trailer (as originally agreed);**
 - 2) an increase in the 2013/14 capital budget for vehicles of £18,000 funded from usable revenue reserves.**
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In order to raise the profile of the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and of the work of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), and to reach new audiences, we would like to extend the range of the events we attend.
- 1.2 Currently our display equipment largely restricts our attendance to bigger events and the involvement of area teams to set up.
- 1.3 Originally the proposal was for a new display trailer at a cost of £20,000 as approved by the Resources & Performance Committee on 13 February 2013, but further exploration of the topic has concluded that the purchase of an integrated display vehicle would allow a wider range of staff to be able to attend events, and would be a more efficient method of providing a presence at smaller localised events and initiatives.

2. Background

- 2.1 Since its pre-operational year in 2010 the SDNPA has attended a range of shows and events each summer to:
 - Raise the profile of the SDNP and promote key messages
 - Carry out public consultations such as the Sense of Place survey and the Postcards for the Future Campaign
 - Act as a point of enquiry for members of the public
- 2.2 The number and range of events attended each summer has risen each year from 15 in 2010 to over 40 planned for 2013.
- 2.3 The area teams lead on the major events within the calendar but staff from all directorates, Members and the South Downs Volunteer Ranger Service all contribute to presence we have on the SDNPA stand. For 2013, members of the Local Access Forum will also be attending events where access is known to be a regular topic of interest.
- 2.4 The Communications and Engagement Strategy has, through its stakeholder analysis, identified a number of stakeholder groups who currently have low interest and influence within the SDNPA. These include urban communities and the forward programme of shows and events has correspondingly expanded to include more urban locations.
- 2.5 The Peer Review identifies a need for the SDNP to raise its profile.
- 2.6 In addition to the main schedule of events we attend there are many smaller functions and ad hoc opportunities for us to have presence and raise our profile.

3. Current display equipment

- 3.1 Currently the SDNPA has a set of marquees at the Midhurst Depot and at Stanmer, and a display trailer stored at Stanmer. Additionally there is a range of displays and activities stored at each of these locations.
- 3.2 The marquees require a landrover or transit van to transport them and a minimum of two people and around two hours to erect. The display trailer requires a landrover to tow it and a driver with a trailer licence and the confidence to manoeuvre it into place, which presents a barrier to many staff.

4. Proposal for capital purchase of new integrated display vehicle

- 4.1 The purchase of a new integrated display vehicle would allow a wider range of staff to attend smaller and harder to reach venues.
- 4.2 The design of the vehicle, with side doors that open up to form a visual backdrop would allow it to be set up and operational in a matter of minutes, and would mean the majority of staff, or Members, could undertake this set up.
- 4.3 Examples of venues where the display vehicle could be deployed include:
- Shopping centres
 - Seafront sites
 - Schools
 - 'Hot Spots' campaign on responsible dog ownership, which will require rangers to work from a base in car parks around the areas where most dog incidents occur
 - Dark Night Skies events in remote locations
 - South Downs Ways events
- 4.4 In order to maintain the displays in the display vehicle professional and current the proposal includes the installation of a central LCD screen, which can run visual images and short films, powered by photovoltaic units in the roof of the vehicle.

5. Resources

- 5.1 The original estimated cost of a display trailer was £20,000. The addition of the cab to convert this to an integrated display vehicle would cost £18,000. It is felt that the benefits this proposal brings in terms of flexibility, ease of use, the range of staff able to deploy the vehicle, and the ability to keep the material presented current through the LCD screen, makes this a sound investment and a resource that can be used across the SDNP for many years to come.
- 5.2 This report therefore seeks approval to increase the 2013/14 capital budget for vehicles by £18,000 which will be funded from usable revenue reserves.

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Appendices	None
SDNPA Consultees	Chief Executive Officer, Director of Corporate Services, Director of Planning, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Director of Operations, Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer & Legal Services.