

Agenda item 9
Report RPC 03/13
Appendix I



South Downs National Park Authority

Draft Corporate Plan 2013-16
Version 0.17

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Foreword from Margaret Paren and Trevor Beattie

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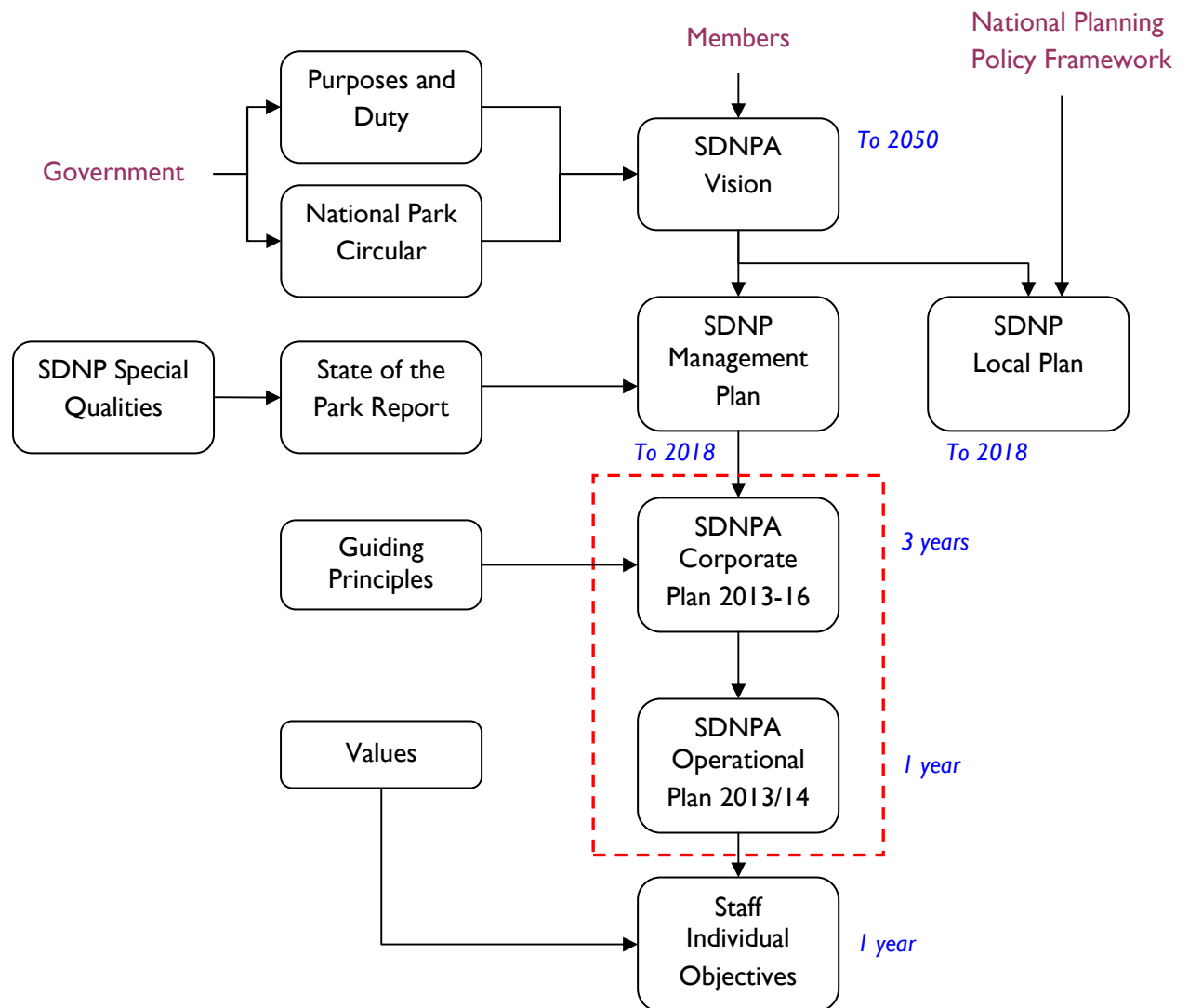
Executive Summary

This Corporate Plan sets out our objectives and priorities for the next three years, along with measures of success and the resources we will use to deliver them.

Summarise content within plan

Setting the Scene

The South Downs National Park is governed by a framework of legislation and strategic plans as shown below.



Each element of this framework is described in more detail below.

The primary purpose of the South Downs National Park Authority Corporate Plan is to set out how we will deliver the South Downs National Park Management Plan.

Purposes and Duty

Our role is clearly defined by Parliament in our statutory Purposes and Duty, which are:



The National Park Authority is the Local Planning Authority for the National Park.

National Park Circular

“The English National Parks and Broads UK Government Vision and Circular 2010” published by Defra guides the work of all National Parks. This sets out the vision that by 2030 English National Parks and the Broads will be places where:

- There are thriving, living, working landscapes notable for their natural beauty and cultural heritage. They inspire visitors and local communities to live within environmental limits and to tackle climate change. The wide range of services they provide (from clean water to sustainable food) are in good condition and valued by society.
- Sustainable development can be seen in action. The communities of the National Parks take an active part in decisions about their future. They are known for having been pivotal in the transformation to a low carbon society and sustainable living. Renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, low carbon transport and travel and healthy, prosperous communities have long been the norm.
- Wildlife flourishes and habitats are maintained, restored and expanded and linked effectively to other ecological networks. Woodland cover has increased and all woodlands are sustainably managed, with the right trees in the right

places. Landscapes and habitats are managed to create resilience and enable adaptation.

- Everyone can discover the rich variety of England's natural and historic environment, and have the chance to value them as places for escape, adventure, enjoyment, inspiration and reflection, and a source of national pride and identity. They will be recognised as fundamental to our prosperity and well-being.

Taken together with the statutory Purposes and Duty, these set out the highest level vision and objectives for all National Parks.

South Downs National Park Authority Vision

At a local level, we have worked closely with our partners to develop a vision and objectives for the South Downs National Park specifically.

By 2050, in the South Downs National Park:

- the iconic English lowland landscapes and heritage will have been conserved and greatly enhanced. These inspirational and distinctive places, where people live, work, farm and relax, are adapting well to the impacts of climate change and other pressures;
- people will understand, value, and look after the vital natural services that the National Park provides. Large areas of high-quality and well-managed habitat will form a network supporting wildlife throughout the landscape;
- opportunities will exist for everyone to discover, enjoy, understand and value the National Park and its special qualities. The relationship between people and landscape will enhance their lives and inspire them to become actively involved in caring for it and using its resources more responsibly;
- its special qualities will underpin the economic and social well-being of the communities in and around it, which will be more self-sustaining and empowered to shape their own future. Its villages and market towns will be thriving centres for residents, visitors and businesses and supporting the wider rural community;
- successful farming, forestry, tourism and other business activities within the National Park will actively contribute to, and derive economic benefit from, its unique identity and special qualities.

The South Downs National Park Authority is one of many organisations working to achieve the 50 year vision for the South Downs National Park.

South Downs National Park Special Qualities

The South Downs National Park is shaped by people and located close to people. It has many special qualities and together, these define the sense of place that

attracts people to live, work and play in the area. These special qualities need to be understood, appreciated, conserved and enhanced.

From the sense of place engagement work carried out in 2010, a summary of the results suggested that we do have a *'shared sense of place about what makes the South Downs special – its unique character and identity - the line of the Downs; sleeping dragon; windmills; prehistoric earthworks; landscape shaped by centuries of farming'*

The special qualities, outlined below, have been developed through an extensive engagement process. We have developed a good understanding of what people value the most about the South Downs. People feel that protecting and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage is the fundamental role of the National Park Authority and its partners.

1	Diverse, inspirational landscapes and breathtaking views		4	An environment shaped by centuries of farming and embracing new enterprise	
2	A rich variety of wildlife and habitats including rare and internationally important species		5	Great opportunities for recreational activities and learning experiences	
3	Tranquil and unspoilt places		6	Well-conserved historical features and a rich cultural heritage	
			7	Distinctive towns and villages, and communities with real pride in their area	

State of the Park Report

The South Downs National Park is a diverse and complex area:

- there are 18 different major landscape types and 49 place-specific 'character areas';
- 110,400 people live within the boundaries of the National Park with another 1.97 million living within 5km miles of it;
- the National Park has a complex administrative environment, overlapping with 15 local Authorities and 180 parish councils;
- within the National Park, landownership is diverse with 5 major estates and significant landholdings by organisations such as the National Trust and the Forestry Commission to name but a few;
- the economy of the area is highly varied including agriculture, forestry, small-medium local enterprises and high tech industries.

The above list simply serves to illustrate that variety and a need to understand the wider context of the National Park are vital to ensure we can play our role in protecting, enhancing and developing the South Downs National Park for the future.

The State of the South Downs National Park report sets out to capture a picture of the National Park as it is today, providing a baseline against which future changes can be measured.

One of many unique features of the South Downs National Park is that the special qualities of the landscape sit at the heart of one of the most prosperous parts of the UK. The South East accounts for nearly 15% of the UK's Gross Value Added (GVA) and the economy of the National Park itself is worth some £2.23 billion. The National Park therefore provides the water supply, the recreational opportunities, the breathing space and the carbon sink for a vital part of the UK economy. It is the green infrastructure on which national prosperity depends.

A crucial starting point in managing change for the future is to capture the essence of what makes the National Park important now – its special qualities. The report is therefore structured around the seven special qualities of the South Downs.

The report has been developed in close collaboration with a wide range of organisations and individuals and will be a key tool in enabling us to tackle the complex issues facing the South Downs National Park. These issues will be addressed in our forthcoming Management Plan and subsequent Local Plan.

For ease of use, each of the main chapters of the report highlights key facts and key data that we intend to measure. As Britain's newest National Park there are gaps in our data and at times in the report we have highlighted where such gaps exist and where we are inviting proposals for help in gathering such data. This report and its contents are intended to be interactive and will be constantly changing as we learn more about the South Downs National Park and add to our knowledge of its special qualities.

The report is important not just for the National Park Authority, but for everyone who cares about the future of this iconic and unique living and working place.

South Downs National Park Management Plan

The South Downs National Park Management Plan will be a strategic plan for all those that have a responsibility to look after this precious and treasured landscape.

The plan is being developed in close collaboration with all those who have an interest in the South Downs National Park and its protection and development.

The aims of the Management Plan are to outline long term plans for the:

- protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the National Park, including its biodiversity and cultural heritage;
- promotion of opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the area's special qualities; and
- encouragement of sustainable forms of economic and community development as defined by our Duty as a National Park.

In delivering these aims, the South Downs National Park seeks to become a beacon for sustainability, innovation and best practice - an exemplar of what is possible – in one of the most pressured regions in the world. The Management Plan will describe how all those with an interest in the National Park can join together to create a landscape of even greater quality and stronger resilience for future generations to enjoy, providing a resource whose benefits extend well beyond the boundary of the protected landscape.

The Management Plan aims will require conservation and enhancement of natural beauty to lie at the heart of all decisions affecting the future of the South Downs National Park.

Our Corporate Plan has been developed to closely align with the emerging priorities and outcomes of the Management Plan. Although work to produce the plan is still underway, much engagement has already been conducted on the outcomes and policies that we should be seeking over the Management Plan period. We have incorporated these early outputs into our Corporate Plan and will keep it under annual review to ensure it continues to closely align with the Management Plan.

South Downs National Park Local Plan

The South Downs National Park has by far the highest population of all National Parks, approximately 110,000. There is also a substantial population within very close proximity of the National Park's boundary in towns such as Eastbourne, Brighton, Worthing, Chichester, Havant, Winchester, Bordon, Haslemere and Burgess Hill. Larger urban areas such as Southampton, Portsmouth, Crawley and London are further afield but are all sufficiently close to make the National Park accessible for a day's visit by well over 10 million people.

The Local Plan will translate the vision and objectives for the National Park into key development policies which will in turn determine the acceptability or otherwise of planning applications for development proposals within the South Downs National Park.

This will be the first Local Plan produced for the whole of the South Downs National Park, following the National Park's designation. The plan will link closely to the Management Plan and include a spatial strategy for the South Downs National Park, core policies and development management policies.

South Downs National Park Authority Corporate and Operational Plans

This Corporate Plan presents the overarching objectives for the National Park Authority for the three year period from 2013-14 to 2016-17. This plan highlights the South Downs National Park Authority contribution to the delivery of the Management Plan objectives for the three year period to 2017. The plan is one of our key management tools to ensure delivery of our Purposes and Duty and, with the Management Plan (when it is ready), and the Operational Plan, is an integral part of our suite of plans that allow the 'golden thread' of strategy through to action to be clearly shown.

The associated, one-year Operational Plan, presents a more detailed view of the objectives and actions that the Authority will be undertaking in the 2013-14 year to work toward achieving the three year outcomes as presented in the Corporate Plan.

Guiding Principles and Values

Our Corporate Plan focuses specifically on the work of the South Downs National Park Authority. In undertaking our work, and seeking to meet our Purposes and Duty, we are keen to be guided by a number of key principles and values. These form the basis of our relationships with partners and our role with communities within, and users of, the National Park. These can be seen in Appendix I.

Our Values underpin how we wish to work with each other:

- Working for the National Park we will:
 - have a common goal determined by the National Park's Purposes and the Duty
 - champion the National Park's aspirations
 - communicate clearly and listen well
 - be flexible, encourage innovation and welcome challenge
- Working together we will:
 - trust and gain mutual benefits
- To deliver results we will:
 - ensure our approach and decisions are informed by evidence
 - be positive and enthusiastic: take the initiative
 - be seen to add value in all that we do.

We are a small organisation and seek to add value by working in partnership with other bodies, aligning objectives at the highest level to ensure shared delivery for the National Park.

Individual Staff Objectives

It is essential that all our staff understand the role they play in helping to achieve the aims and objectives of the National Park Authority. A vital part of our 'golden thread' is to ensure that all staff have clearly defined objectives giving them clarity on their role and linking up to the Operational and Corporate Plans. Staff are rewarded for achievement of objectives through a performance related pay scheme that seeks to drive the delivery of the Corporate objectives and rewards staff for superior performance. In this way, staff are able to see how their contribution feeds into the overarching achievements of the National Park Authority and the higher level Purposes and Duty.

Overarching Objectives

A set of high level outcomes is being developed for the 50 year vision for the National Park as part of the National Park Management Plan. These outcomes provide the basis for our short term priorities for 2013-16. We, the National Park Authority, will:

- 1 Support the development of the South Downs National Park as a special, thriving living and working landscape**
- 2 Provide opportunities for people within and outside the South Downs National Park to connect to its unique and special places**
- 3 Encourage sustainable actions by businesses, communities and individuals across the National Park, and manage our own corporate impact**

Key delivery mechanisms

We have developed detailed delivery plans for our projects and programmes which set out timescales, targets and deliverables. Some larger projects such as the Way Ahead, Nature Improvement Area have their own set of performance measures and frameworks for evaluation.

We are developing a corporate improvement plan using information from a range of sources including our staff survey, our recent peer review, our internal audit programme and learning from customer feedback to support continuous improvement.

How we will monitor progress against these objectives

Many of the outcomes we are seeking to achieve for the National Park are, by their nature, long term and require significant partnership involvement. We are committed to working with our partners to deliver these outcomes and recognise that it is only through the success of these partnerships that many of the objectives will be achieved.

Although this plan is a focus on what we, the National Park Authority, will do to support the achievement of priorities for the National Park, we will not be able to achieve our part unless we work closely with stakeholders. Many of the delivery mechanisms and measures of success will require a joint effort by two or more agencies to achieve the targets we have set ourselves.

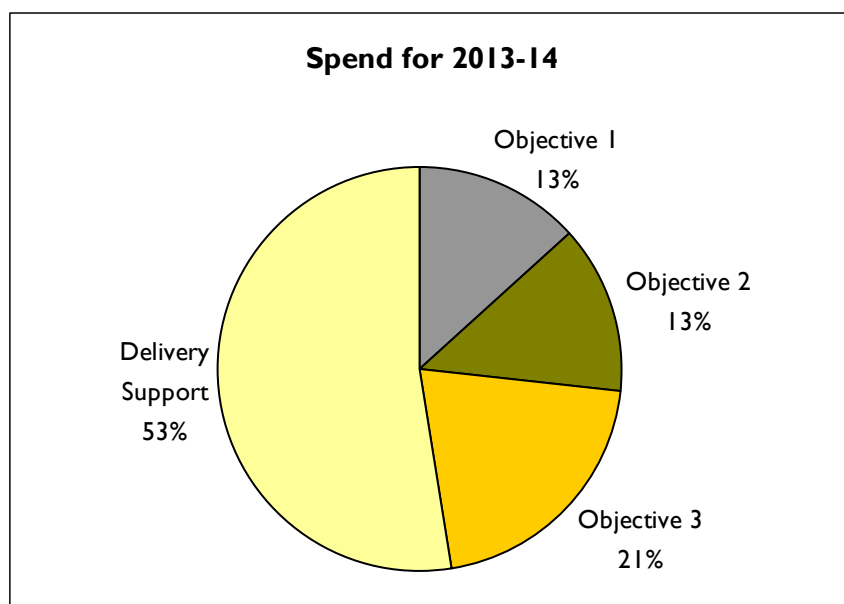
Progress towards demonstrating that we have delivered the success measures will be monitored by the South Downs National Park Authority quarterly where possible. This will be via reports to the Resources and Performance Committee, which are published on our website.

In the 'measures of success' tables that follow, those items that are shown in *italics* are key performance indicators that we are delivering on in partnership. Those that are not italicised are solely within our remit to manage and deliver against.

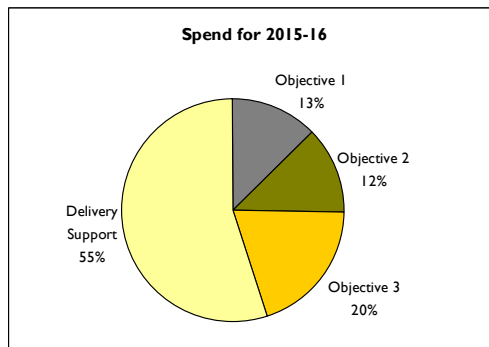
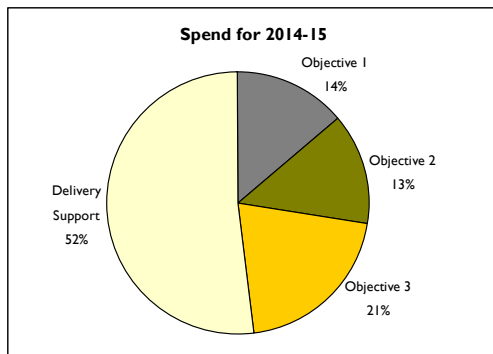
How we allocate resources to deliver our objectives

The following charts show the budget that is attributed to direct delivery of the overarching objectives in comparison to that committed to the running of the National park Authority and the indirect support necessary to the delivery of the objectives. Indirect support comes from the Strategic Management Team, Human Resources and the management and delivery of services organised externally through the major corporate contracts covering Financial Services, Legal Services, ICT and Monitoring Officer.

The indirect costs have not been allocated to the individual objectives at this time and only the direct budget wholly attributable to each goal has been included in the charts.



Funds have been largely allocated to projects supporting specific objectives for 2013/14. In future financial years however, those funds are still held centrally and will be allocated to specific projects by the South Downs National Park Authority over the coming years. This means that the charts for future years show a decreasing amount of money committed to each objective. These figures will increase as the funds held centrally are allocated to projects supporting those objectives.



Objective I:

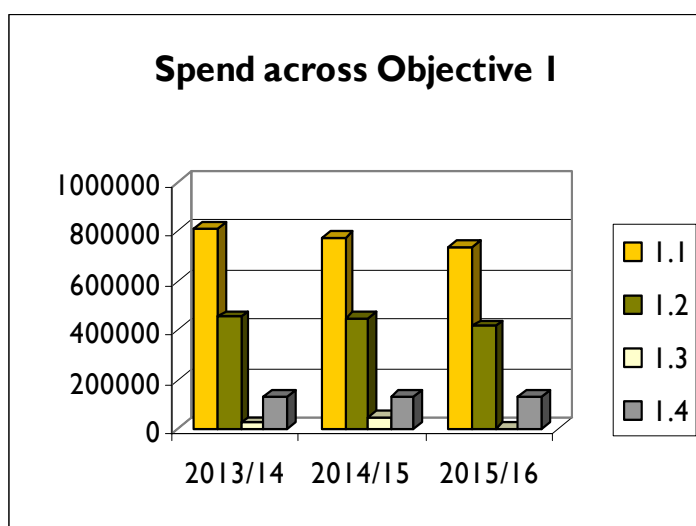
Support the development of the South Downs National Park as a special, thriving living and working landscape

We will work with a range of major partnerships to deliver key outcomes which conserve and enhance the landscape and biodiversity and heritage assets in the South Downs National Park. We will also manage the impacts of large-scale and cumulative small-scale developments.

Ref	Outcome	Delivery Mechanism	Budget 2013-14	Budget 2014-15	Budget 2015-16
I.1	Connected areas of key habitats in good condition and under sustainable management	Production of National Park Management Plan	815,913	775,963	737,530
		Targeted landscape scale projects:			
		Wooded Heaths			
		Nature Improvement Area			
		Farmland Birds Initiative			
		NPMP delivery framework and the set up of new projects			
		Support sustainable woodland management and sustainable forestry across the SDNP			
		Major Partnerships Fund support of landscape scale projects and local programmes			
I.2	Increased population and size and distribution of priority species	Landscape scale delivery initiatives	452,878	447,413	415,150
		Support sustainable woodland management and sustainable forestry across the SDNP			
I.3	Cultural heritage assets are being managed, their condition is improving and fewer buildings and archaeological sites are at risk	Design Panel and conservation design work	22,900	44,200	
		'In the High Woods' project – a LIDAR map of the western area of the National Park			
		Identification of heritage at risk sites within the SDNP			

Ref	Outcome	Delivery Mechanism	Budget 2013-14	Budget 2014-15	Budget 2015-16
		Conservation Area appraisal strategy			
		Conservation Area Action Plan programme			
I.4	Negative impacts of development on landscape character and distinctiveness are managed effectively	Development of Single Local Plan	129,030	130,570	132,160
		Development Management			
		Establish Highways Partnership – to develop improved rural road design			
		Local Projects			
		Development of Joint Core Strategies for minerals and waste with East Sussex County Council, Hampshire County Council and West Sussex County Council			

The chart illustrates the proportional change in allocated resources over the three year period for Objective I, reflecting the gradual allocation of resources to suitable projects.



- I.1 Connected areas of key habitats in good condition and under sustainable management.
- I.2 Increased population and size and distribution of priority species
- I.3 Cultural heritage assets are being managed, their condition is improving and fewer buildings and archaeological sites are at risk
- I.4 Negative impacts of development on landscape character and distinctiveness are managed effectively

Objective I: Measures of success

Ref	Measure(s)	3 year Target/milestone
	Produce final NPMP plan <i>% of SSSI, SINC's and SNCIs in improving condition</i> <i>Area of new HLS agreements within SDNP</i> <i>Area of chalk grassland in improving condition</i> <i>% of woodland in active management</i> <i>Area of more sustainable agricultural production</i> <i>Proportion of landscape scale projects partnerships initiated by SDNPA that successfully result in attracting external funding</i>	December 2013 Increase or no reduction Increase in area Increase in area Increase in area or no reduction Increase or no reduction 70 % ? presumably all the bids we put in won't be successful
	<i>Numbers of priority species</i> <i>Wider distribution of priority species</i>	% Increase % Increase in geographic spread of priority species
	<i>% of conservation areas with up-to-date character appraisals</i> <i>% of Listed Buildings 'at risk' rescued during the year</i> <i>% of scheduled monuments 'at high or medium risk' conserved during the year</i> Agree a project plan and monitoring system Prepare a draft Sustainability appraisal	Increase or no reduction Increase or no reduction Increase or no reduction June 2013 March 2014
	<i>% of major planning applications dealt with within 13 weeks</i>	
	<i>Length of power line undergrounded</i>	Increase

Success measures in italics are those we deliver with partners

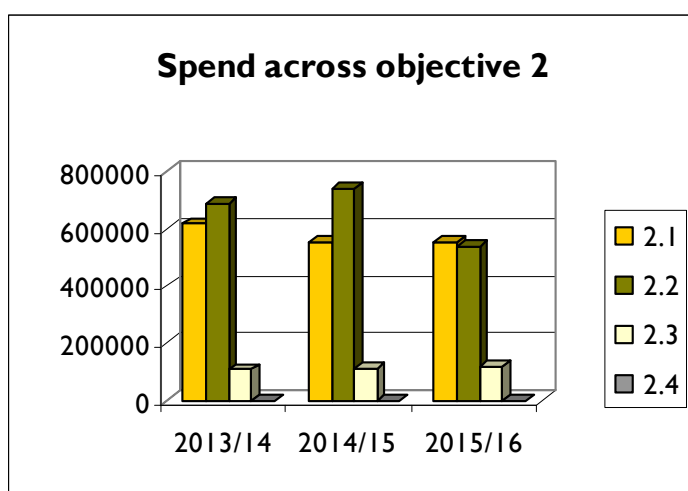
Objective 2:**Provide opportunities for people within and outside the South Downs National Park to connect to its unique and special places**

We will promote opportunities for awareness learning and engagement, seek to ensure quality access management and accessibility and support the development of sustainable tourism.

Ref	Outcome	Delivery Mechanism	Budget 2013-14	Budget 2014-15	Budget 2015-16
2.1	Greater understanding of the special qualities of the National Park	Brand and identity Education Projects/Partnerships Local Projects Our South Downs Learning Partnership Volunteer service	617,420	554,997	555,090
2.2	Increases in responsible behaviour leading to action which conserves and enhances wildlife, the landscape and cultural heritage	Behaviour change campaign	688,765	741,557	540,960
		Local Sustainable Transport Partnership			
		Education Projects/Partnerships			
		Guided walks and other activities			
		Volunteer service			
		Support for improved cycling networks and facilities including electric bicycles			
2.3	A high quality Access network	Access Land management and enhancement and supported improvements to the Access network across the National Park	108,790	111,000	121,270
		SDW Management Plan			

Ref	Outcome	Delivery Mechanism	Budget 2013-14	Budget 2014-15	Budget 2015-16
		Local Projects			
		Monitor Access and Highways Memoranda of Understanding, Accords, Service Level Agreements			
2.4	Protect range and diversity of traditional culture and skills and increase contemporary arts inspired by the Special Qualities	Sustainable Communities Fund support of local projects and programmes			
		Local Projects			

The chart illustrates the proportional change in allocated resources over the three year period for Objective 2, reflecting the gradual allocation of resources to suitable projects.



- 2.1 Greater understanding of the special qualities of the National Park
- 2.2 Increases in responsible behaviour leading to action which conserves and enhances wildlife, the landscape and cultural heritage.
- 2.3 A high quality access network
- 2.4 Protect range and diversity of traditional culture and skills and increase contemporary arts inspired by the Special Qualities

Objective 2: Measures of success

Ref	Measure(s)	3 year Target/milestone
	% awareness of the National Park of residents and those outside the National Park	Increase
	% of Partners using shared brand /Sense of Place toolkit	Increase
	% of BME communities in the visitor profile of the National Park	Increase
	% of schools within a 5km buffer using the South Downs as for Learning Outside the Classroom at least once per year	Increase
	Number of people participating in walks guided by SDNPA staff	Increase or no

Ref	Measure(s)	3 year Target/milestone
		reduction
	<p>Total number of SDNPA Volunteer days or, Percentage increase in SDNPA volunteer days</p> <p>No of SDNPA Volunteer days attended by 'under represented' groups</p> <p><i>% of transport hubs with targeted information about how to access the SDNP</i></p> <p><i>Area of land in more sustainable agricultural production</i></p>	<p>Increase or no reduction or, % increase</p> <p>Increase or no reduction</p> <p>Increase</p> <p>Increase</p>
	<p><i>% of total length of footpaths and other rights of way that are easy to use</i></p> <p><i>Number of SDW road crossings which need improvements to make them safe</i></p> <p><i>Length of leisure cycle routes</i></p> <p><i>% of visitors using public transport modes</i></p> <p><i>% of residents using public transport modes</i></p>	<p>Increase or no reduction</p> <p>Decrease or no increase</p> <p>Increase</p> <p>Increase</p> <p>Decrease</p>
	<p>Financial contribution by SDNPA to cultural, artistic and traditional crafts</p> <p>Number of apprenticeships in rural or traditionally crafts</p>	<p>Increase</p> <p>Increase</p>

Success measures in italics are those we deliver with partners

Objective 3:

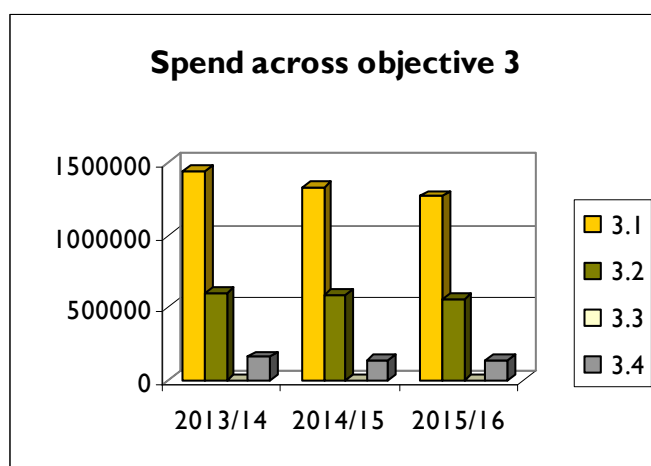
Encourage sustainable actions by businesses, communities and individuals across the National Park, and manage our own corporate impact

We will provide information and support to help communities better understand their environment and the impact of their action on it and make sure they are engaged in the design and development of their local surroundings. We will support the growth of sustainable local businesses.

Ref	Outcome	Delivery Mechanism	Budget 2013-14	Budget 2014-15	Budget 2015-16
3.1	Development that responds to local needs and enhances the economic and environmental condition of communities in the National Park	Single Local Plan for the National Park	1,438,330	1,333,030	1,267,730
		Community led Planning			
		Enforcement Strategy			
		Development Management			
3.2	A diverse sustainable economy that contributes to the well being of local communities and supports National Park purposes	Single Local Plan for the National Park	607,963	591,430	559,600
		Sense of Place toolkit			
		Support sustainable woodland management and sustainable forestry across the SDNP			
		Brandi and shared identity for the NP			
		Local projects			
		Sustainable Tourism strategy?			
		Sustainable Communities Fund support of local projects and programmes			
3.3	Reduced impact of SDNPA activities on the environment	Sustainability action plan			
		Relocation to The South			

Ref	Outcome	Delivery Mechanism	Budget 2013-14	Budget 2014-15	Budget 2015-16
		Downs Centre			
		SDNPA Estate development			
3.4	A learning organisation with effective performance management systems	Learning and development strategy	161,750	145,250	145,250
		Performance Framework Review			
		Service improvements in Planning agency arrangements			

The chart illustrates the proportional change in allocated resources over the three year period for Objective 3 , reflecting the gradual allocation of resources to suitable projects.



- 3.1 Development that responds to local needs and enhances the economic and environmental condition of communities in the National Park
- 3.2 A sustainable economy that contributes to the well being of local communities and supports National Park purposes
- 3.3 Reduced impact of SDNPA activities on the environment
- 3.4 A learning organisation with effective performance management systems

Outcome 3: Measures of success

Ref	Measure(s)	3 year Target/milestone
	Development of the Single Local Plan	2016
	% of new buildings that are built to good or excellent sustainability standards	Increase
	Proportion of communities with access to essential services within 2km	Increase or no reduction
	Proportion of local communities with Community led plans	Increase
	Proportion of local communities preparing or with a complete local Landscape Character Assessment	Increase
	Numbers using the Sense of Place Toolkit	Increase

Ref	Measure(s)	3 year Target/milestone
	Number of businesses using shared South Downs brand	Increase
	Number of GTBS accredited businesses	Increase
	Number of staff using car sharing schemes for commuting	Increase
	% of energy sourced from renewable sources	Increase
	SDNPA greenhouse gas emissions	Reduce
	Implement revised performance management system	December 2013

Success measures in italics are those we deliver with partners

Strategic Context

The South Downs National Park is subject to significant influences and pressures that can cause the character of the landscape to change. These are often termed 'drivers for change', and include the significant influences such as climate change, planning and development, land use and economic factors - amongst many others.

By identifying the key drivers of change within the South Downs, we can start to understand, and map, the main pressures that exist now, and in the future. We can better understand how they might influence the landscape character, the special qualities, and the integrity of the National Park.

We have shown above, in the Overarching Objectives section, an analysis of how we are planning to allocate our resources based upon our Objectives and their intended outcomes. This allocation has been made with a number of assumptions in mind such as:

- An intention to increase in the level of resource dedicated to our Planning and Development Management function to drive superior delivery and service;
- Seeking a reduction in core costs and driving further efficiencies in our back office functions and shared services;
- Focusing our resources as much as possible toward the achievement of our three overarching objectives; and
- Ensuring there is sufficient resilience within the organisation to maintain progress even against a climate of reducing funding.

It is of course possible to prepare alternative allocation models which would change the balance of resources available to any given area of our work. This is part of our governance approach and a key way in which our Members will design and develop the allocation of resources to meet the priorities that we set ourselves.

In addition to conscious changes we are making in order to manage our resources to meet priorities, there are other external factors that we have taken account of in the preparation of our Corporate Plan. We have considered specific likely scenarios that may affect us and our work and tried to plan for those to ensure we are ready should they occur. These scenarios cover a range of areas including legislative changes, environmental changes, technological developments and political and financial pressures. Some of these are illustrated below.

Scenario	Our current thinking and work to address
Political/Legislative	
Political changes in government policy and approach e.g. Localism Act, CAP reform	The Localism Act 2011 seeks to encourage communities to take an active role in shaping their local environment by influencing how and where their services and facilities are provided. Changes to the planning system allow communities to produce community led plans for their areas. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new levy that local planning authorities can choose to charge on

	<p>new developments in their area; the money can be used to support development by funding infrastructure that the council, local community and neighbourhoods want.</p> <p>The European Landscape Convention – focus on community involvement in identifying what they most value about their landscapes.</p> <p>We have developed toolkits to and have provided active support and advice to local communities to produce their own community led plans. We will continue to provide this support and seek other opportunities to support local communities in articulating and achieving their aspirations for their area.</p> <p>The Government is also keen to promote community engagement and volunteering. We have a very active Volunteer Ranger Service and are committed to developing and extending volunteering opportunities in the Park.</p> <p>Much of the landscape of the Downs is shaped by farmers. Changes to agricultural support mechanisms and global markets will influence the choices landowners make. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is a key driver. We work closely with Natural England and other partners to ensure optimum targeting of agri-environment funds to farmers to maximise the benefits to the Park.</p> <p>The future of CAP is currently uncertain, which presents a challenge to future delivery with farmers. We will work with farmers and others to indentify and prepare for the changes.</p>
Financial	

<p>Impact of Government plans to reduce spending and stimulate economic growth</p>	<p>In setting budget and preparing our Medium Term Financial Strategy we have planned for the expected reducing Government funding to National Parks and the wider public sector.</p> <p>Our current resource plans are designed to be affordable during the duration of our grant forecasts, ensuring the organisation is correctly sized for its available financial income.</p> <p>We are developing plans to increase our income generation through externally funded projects and direct fund raising activity as well as investigating opportunities for creating a Charitable Trust for the South Downs.</p> <p>Our priorities are to add value in all we do, develop sound partnership approaches and ensure we are maintaining a lean core organisation.</p> <p>With regard to our role as the Planning Authority, we are preparing to continue with our current model of outsourced planning arrangements, and will be seeking to drive efficiencies from these partnerships. This model will remain under review to ensure it offers value and high quality services.</p> <p>We are already planning for the expected changes to the CIL charging regime.</p>
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Economic/Social

<p>SME development and the support of local and sustainable economies</p>	<p>The new Common Agricultural Policy and subsequent UK Government priorities may put renewed emphasis on access to the countryside and give us the opportunity, working with local landowners to deliver improved access across the South Downs. As Access Authority, we work with the four local highway authorities to provide a quality and accessible rights of way network.</p> <p>New information technologies have the potential to provide significant benefits to the communities and businesses within the National Park. We will seek to widen the availability of fast broadband infrastructure within the National Park to facilitate business growth and support home based working.</p> <p>There are 43 million visitor days spent in the South Downs National Park. Sustainable tourism is therefore a priority to prevent damage to the special qualities that attract people to the area in the first place.</p> <p>We will develop a range of policies around, visitor management, managing development, sustainability and provide clear leadership to develop a consistent and co-ordinated approach to interpretation and marketing of the South Downs as a sustainable tourism destination, based</p>
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	on shared identity and agreed brand values.
Technological	
Further development of land management techniques, agricultural practices and bio-technology and exploitation of sustainable energy sources	<p>Energy demand, particularly the development of renewable energy sources will also be a challenge going forward. There is likely to be pressure for green energy generation within the South Downs National Park. We will support renewable energy schemes at the right scale and in appropriate locations.</p> <p>We will promote sustainable resource management and energy efficiency and track and deliver Government climate change strategy targets in the South Downs National Park.</p> <p>The South Downs Centre will showcase biomass heating and Photovoltaic energy in order to promote their use across the South Downs National Park.</p>
Environmental	
Climate change and environmental impacts	<p>Climate change has direct impacts on landscape features, habitats and species, as well as driving changes to land use or crop types as an adaptive response.</p> <p>The chalk aquifer provides drinking water for 1.2 million people and 41% of all water bodies in the South Downs National Park are failing Water Directive targets. The vulnerability of water supply due to over abstraction, land use and climate change is a key driver.</p> <p>We will work with organisations responsible for water management to improve the sustainability of water resources and waste-water management. We will support and develop catchment-scale approaches which integrate land-use, wildlife conservation, water quality and flood risk management.</p> <p>In addition to the challenges of the impacts of climate change, habitat loss, fragmentation, degradation and invasive species are also important drivers for our work.</p> <p>We are developing a range of specific policies targeted at particular sectors or industries, such as farming, forestry and woodland and minerals extraction to encourage sustainable approaches.</p>

Organisational Context

Creating and sustaining an organisation that operates efficiently and effectively is a major objective of the National Park Authority. To fulfil our Purposes and Duty we need the right management and organisational structure that is focussed and set up to deliver our Corporate Plan in an efficient way.

Over the period of this plan there are a number of key tasks to ensure this can occur. There is also much that is already set up and working as 'business as usual' but that will require continued focus to ensure our processes and systems add value to our delivery. Examples of these key tasks include:

- developing a realistic financial strategy that recognises the increasing importance of attracting a variety of funding sources.
- creating an organisational and delivery structure that reflects our business needs and is closely aligned to the Management Plan objectives.
- continuing to focus an increasing proportion of resources toward work on the ground which will allow us to align our staff closely to the business requirements whilst keeping overhead costs affordable.
- continuing to increase back office efficiency by keeping the corporate centre lean by innovative use of volunteers, outsourcing and working in partnership.
- developing further our close partnerships with local planning authorities and other providers to deliver a planning service in the South Downs National Park that offers service excellence and is locally focussed.

Financial planning

We are required to set a balanced budget in accordance with legislation. The basis for revenue expenditure is the pursuit of the 'Special Purposes' for which National Parks were designated under the Environment Act 1995. Section 65 of this Act determines the Special Purposes as conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of National Parks, and for promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Parks by the public. In pursuit of these twin purposes, we also have a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.

We have adopted a prudent approach to budget setting and have sought to establish a permanent staffing structure and other ongoing revenue costs that reflect a level of expenditure below our projected grant income as far ahead as the indicative funding in 2014/15. By taking this approach we hope to ensure that we can avoid making commitments that may become unaffordable in the longer term. In this way we are creating flexibility in the future to fund new priorities identified in the Management Plan.

Over the period of this Corporate Plan, as well as ensuring efficient use of our resources, we will:

- Re-assess and re-prioritise priorities in the light of any future Spending Review outcomes, particularly in terms of the level of resources available;
- Identify opportunities to borrow and lever in investment;
- Develop external funding and enabling programmes.

We recognise the increasing pressure on government funded bodies to add value in all they do. To this end we take a keen focus in exploring the opportunities available through additional funding sources such as Heritage Lottery grants and European funds. As a new body we have had success in this area and will continue to learn from our experience to develop our approach to funding bids and partnership project opportunities.

We also recognise the need to supplement our income by seeking new and innovative methods to support our work and the South Downs National Park. We are investigating and developing our approach to generating revenue and will consider the merits of borrowing opportunities for specific projects. We are also beginning to examine the mechanisms for setting up a South Downs National Park charitable trust.

Excellence in Planning

The South Downs National Park Authority is the eighth largest planning authority in England with around 4,000 applications per year, and responsibility for minerals and waste. The National Park has 15 local authorities with some of their area within its boundaries. We are responsible for adopting a Local Plan for the whole of the National Park area.

Our initial estimates showed that we may have needed over 100 staff to deliver an in-house development management function, involving the transfer of staff from other local authorities in the area.

In order to deliver our statutory planning functions, a series of agency agreements are in place with local authorities; these set out how we will deliver development management in partnership with host authorities. The agency arrangements are based on section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, which enables one local authority to provide services on behalf of another. The bulk of applications are therefore determined by the host authority and we determine applications which may have a significant impact on the National Park ourselves. There are guidelines that provide the parameters for determining whether a proposal could be significant.

This approach enables us to focus on developing a comprehensive planning policy framework for the South Downs National Park. This is consistent with our Guiding Principles as it is based on working in partnership, aims to improve quality and consistency for those using the service, and allows us to focus on strategic issues.

Since the April 2012 four local authorities (with smaller areas within the National Park) have decided not to continue with the agency agreements. We now deal with these applications ourselves and have recruited some extra staff to do so, although this is offset by savings from not paying those authorities.

Our focus for Planning over the period of this Corporate Plan is to conclude the partnership working on Joint Core Strategies with some LA's, and deliver the Single Local Plan for the SDNP. We will also conclude Joint Core Strategies for minerals and waste. This will be supported by the promotion and support of community led planning and where appropriate Neighbourhood Plans.

In addition we will focus on strengthening the approach to enforcement and developing an enforcement strategy. Our other major focus will be on improving the existing use of IDox and implementing additional IDox UNIFORM modules to provide improved customer service. There will also be a focus on ensuring quality is at the heart of both how we offer the service to the users, and the outcomes of our decision-making. Ensuring locally informed design, that responds to the wider landscape and the climate change agenda is at the heart of development is key and we will be developing guidelines and using expertise to inform new proposals and celebrate well designed schemes.

There will also be a focus on working together with host authorities and others to improve planning development management productivity whilst remaining lean and strengthening partnership arrangements.

Enhancing efficiency

In order to maintain a lean corporate core, work with partners and reduce duplication, we share many of our back office functions with other organisations. This allows us to have access to a greater breadth and depth of experienced professionals in finance, legal services and ICT that we would have if we were to operate these functions in-house.

However, in sharing services in this way, we need to maintain a keen focus on contract management to ensure value for money and delivery of service. Each main corporate contract has an identified contract manager who has the responsibility for actively monitoring performance and managing services from external providers. A contract management process is used across the organisation to ensure each contract is managed in the same manner.

As well as sharing services from others we will explore whether there are services we undertake that we could offer to partners and other organisations. This will feed into our plans for generating income for the Authority which we can then re-use in pursuit of our Purposes and Duty.

Continuously learning

It is our aim to be a learning organisation - a learning organisation is the term given to an organisation that facilitates the learning of its people and continuously transforms itself based on lessons learnt and feedback it receives.

In order to do this we have a number of mechanisms:

- **Benchmarking** – We collect information and data from other organisations, in both the private and public sector, to learn and use good practice from others.

- Peer Review – In 2012 we underwent the National Park Authority Peer Review process. This has provided us with a great deal of useful feedback on our set up to date and those areas where we might be able to make improvements. It has also highlighted areas of strength so we can learn from those and duplicate good practice in others places.
- Internal Audit – We undergo a programme of planned internal audit, conducted by a third party. This enables us to test the processes and systems we have in place in order to ensure we are adhering to policy and best practice. Recommendations from internal audits are actively managed and regularly reported to the Standards and Audit Committee to ensure appropriate Member involvement and scrutiny.
- Service and project reviews – We will conduct reviews of our major service areas and projects in order to examine how we work and how effectively projects have been managed to ensure we are delivering all possible efficiency savings in the short, medium and long term.
- Complaints and compliments – We actively seek customer feedback on our performance and work with customers to achieve high service levels. We will aim to put in place formal customer service standards and ensure our people are appropriately supported to offer the right level of proactive service to our customers and stakeholders.

Our continuous improvement plan can be seen in Appendix 3.

Valuing our people

Our staff, members and volunteers are fundamental to our success, especially as we progress through to the implementation of our Management Plan.

To achieve success we must foster a common culture and create a fully integrated workforce, which has the capabilities to successfully deliver our objectives.

To achieve this, we have implemented a number of practical solutions:

- Staff and member survey – We seek to gather the views and opinions of our people to inform future policy development.
- Training and skills development - We recognise the importance of developing the skills and competencies of our people to enable them to deliver our work. To support staff, members and volunteers in this we have an induction programme that is aimed at developing an underpinning contextual knowledge for staff; we have introduced courses on themes such as 'Planning for non planners', project management and communication which will build skills and competencies; we offer relevant training for volunteers to ensure they are appropriately equipped to work with us; we support staff in attending job-specific training and development events and offer opportunities for further education.
- Consultation - We have a staff joint consultation group and work closely with UNISON.
- PDR system - We have a system of performance pay that encourages and rewards superior performance for all staff.

How do we ensure risks are managed?

We define risk management as “the culture, processes & structure which come together to optimise the management of potential opportunities and adverse effects.” It enables the effective use of resources, secures the assets of the organisation and its continued financial and organisational well-being. As a publicly accountable body this is a vital part of ensuring we can demonstrate effective use of resources and delivery against agreed plans.

The purpose of managing risks is to safeguard us, our customers and the interests of our stakeholders, by identifying and managing all threats to the achievement of our objectives. Our risk management approach considers the impact and likelihood of events, changes or issues affecting the achievement of our objectives. Risks are assessed using a standard risk scoring matrix to provide a level of significance. Risks are kept continually under review and the levels change depending on the mitigations in place. In doing so we hope to foster an improved risk management culture, generate a better understanding of risks associated with our work and how we can mitigate for them.

Our corporate risk register provides a prioritised list of those risks which could affect the achievement of our objectives. This register is agreed by the Strategic Management Team (SMT) and reviewed by SMT and Members regularly. Each Directorate also has a risk register from which major risks are escalated to the corporate register if necessary. Major projects each have a specific risk register and health and safety risk assessments are regularly carried out for events and for certain activities carried out by our Rangers and Volunteers.

More detailed information is included in our full risk register which will be published on the internet alongside this Corporate Plan.

Social responsibility

It is our aim to be a socially responsible organisation, delivering our objectives and plan in such a way as to reduce our impact on the natural environment and ensure we are inclusive in all we do. There are a number of ways we seek to manage our impact on the South Downs National Park both in terms of the natural and social environment. These are explained in brief below.

Sustainability Action Plan

We are all aware of the need to keep the National Park a clean, green space and with that in mind we need to think about how we, as an organisation, might be able to reduce our carbon footprint. We can act as an exemplar by demonstrating best practice in our response to climate change. We want to be recognised as a leading player in managing the impacts of climate change on the South Downs National Park and contributing to a low carbon economy.

The Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan is focused on the difference we as an organisation can make in terms of our direct impacts. It addresses how we aim to undertake our business in as sustainable a way as possible.

We have identified four areas to focus on and frame the action plan around:

- **Policy** - This concerns the way we make decisions, ensuring they are underpinned by the five principles of sustainable development. This means that our decision making processes should include an assessment against these five principles. This includes regular review of the impact of our policies.
- **Operations** - This is about using our assets and directing our activities in a more sustainable way, for example, to take account of environmental limits by reducing carbon emissions, water use and waste.
- **Procurement** - This is about the way in which we procure to ensure that we maximise the positive benefits and minimise the negative impacts upon the environment, communities and economies from which goods and services are sourced.
- **People** - This is how our staff, Members and volunteers are expected and enabled to behave sustainably when carrying out South Downs National Park Authority business. It is also about promoting awareness and encouraging our people to be ambassadors in their work with the wider community.

The detailed action plan with measures and targets can be seen in Appendix 4.

Equality and Diversity Policy

We are committed to tackling discrimination and promoting equality and diversity in all areas of our work, including service provision, access to services, employment and policy development.

We aim to do so in a manner that is transparent and in line with our guiding principles and values and we expect all who are associated with the Authority –

Members, staff and volunteers, as well as partners and contractors who work with us – to uphold the policy and actively promote it when representing the Authority.

We aim to be an inclusive organisation, where diversity is respected, valued and promoted. We are committed to comply with the Equality Act 2010, along with relevant best practice guidelines and Codes of Practice, as outlined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. As well as the protected characteristics specifically covered by the Equality Duty, we have also chosen to include socio-economic factors to our list of protected characteristics, given the nature of our business, our overarching purposes and duty and the importance which we place on developing employment and social capacity opportunities.

We are specifically committed to:

- Promoting access to the National Park for all users;
- Encouraging people from different ethnic communities to visit the park and access its complete range of services;
- Considering the needs of people suffering from social exclusion either through employment or economic disadvantage;
- Promoting equality and valuing diversity within the workforce; and
- Ensuring that all who work for, or represent the Authority, have received training which enables them to confidently challenge discrimination or inappropriate behaviour.

Our Equality and Diversity Policy provides a clear framework for translating our policy into action. It outlines the responsibilities of Members, the Senior Management Team, managers and individuals to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and will be monitored in order to ensure that our Equality and Diversity and other associated policies are complied with and that corrective action is initiated in the event that they are not.

Approach to Procurement and support of local suppliers

We are committed to ensuring that services are delivered in a way that protects the quality of the environment and minimises any adverse impact on community well being. We recognise that procurement can be integral in delivering more sustainable outcomes for the National Park and that to achieve this it is necessary to ensure that environmental and broader sustainability considerations are taken into account throughout the procurement process, along with the use of local suppliers where possible.

We are committed both to outsourcing services and to working in partnership. This culture of partnerships and outsourcing places a strong reliance on partners, suppliers and contractors to deliver the goals of the organisation. It is important therefore that the procurement and contract management function is sufficiently robust to ensure that the best possible value is obtained from all of those relationships.

We are developing ways to engage with suppliers, especially those who are local and share the overall ethos of the National Park, to ensure their experience of

bidding for work with us is positive. We publish tender opportunities on our website and encourage early supplier involvement in an aim to promote better and more cost effective outcomes both for ourselves and the supplier.

During 2013-14 we plan to make use of electronic tendering, which will allow bidders to upload their documents, saving costs on printing and delivery.

We feel it is not enough to include sustainability as part of our evaluation criteria. Sustainability is considered for each contract as part of the objective setting process in the development of the sourcing strategy. We consider sustainability in the following terms:

- Environmental - These can be met through the output of the supplier, by stipulating the type of materials and the content of those materials that they provide under the contract. Examples of this might be in recycled paper, energy efficient electrical devices or timber from FSG approved sources. Environmental considerations can also be taken into account with regard to the supplier's inputs; how they go about their own business in terms of the working methods they use, how they source materials and their own practices for specifying sub-contractors.
- Economic - This is about the local economy and not specifically about local suppliers. While it is not legal to specify local suppliers, it is possible to examine the contributions that a supplier might make to the local economy as a result of winning a particular contract, through sourcing, recruitment, training etc.
- Social - This is very similar to economic and again it is possible to examine in some contracts, what a supplier can contribute to the social wellbeing of a community as a result of winning a contract. This can range from recruiting long term unemployed to providing legacy plant or equipment to the local community

Governance

Our governance framework, which brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes is in place to support us in delivering good performance, good use of public money and ultimately, good outcomes.

Our Corporate Governance Framework ensures accountability to our users, stakeholders and the wider community. It comprises the systems, processes and values by which decisions are made and functions undertaken to deliver the Purposes and Duty. Making up our Corporate Governance Framework are:

- Our local code of corporate governance;
- Standing Orders and committee terms of reference that regulate the proceedings, meetings and business of the Authority and its Committees;
- Our Scheme of Delegation is a framework for decision-making and accountability between meetings of the full Authority. It contains detailed provisions on the powers and responsibilities delegated to committees and officers of the Authority;

- Financial Regulations and Procedures direct the proper administration of our financial affairs and lay out the financial policies of the Authority;
- Procurement procedures and contract standing orders ensure that our procurement practices are robust and effective while remaining transparent and in accordance with recognised good practice.

Supporting our Corporate Governance Framework, and underpinned by our values and guiding principles, we have in place codes of conduct that guide our Members and staff in their work. We have a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct and this is reflected in our codes and protocols.

Appendix I - Guiding Principles

Our Guiding Principles underpin how we work with others and what we seek to deliver as an organisation:

- Champion the South Downs National Park with inspiring, strategic leadership and priorities that carry wide support.
- Bring people together, acting as a coordinator for partners and community groups, to engage, inspire and achieve more for the National Park through combined action.
- Influence policy-making and the decisions at local, regional and national levels, acting as a voice for the South Downs National Park and a source of knowledge and expertise.
- Deliver flagship projects, drawing down external funding and filling the gaps that others cannot fill and are too important to be left.
- Engage directly with local residents, farmers, land owners, land managers and visitors to understand their priorities and to provide advice or support in helping achieve our shared aspirations for the South Downs National Park.
- Encourage volunteering to support National Park purposes and help strengthen communities.
- Build effective partnerships to tackle the challenges facing the South Downs National Park, including climate change, demographic change and development pressures.

Appendix 2 – Operational Plan and Budget

Appendix 3 – Continuous Improvement Plan

Appendix 4 – Sustainability Action Plan

SDNPA Corporate Sustainability Action Plan

Theme	Outcome	Measure(s)	Target/milestone	Yearly targets	
				2013/14	2014/15
Policy	SDNPA major projects adhere to sustainable development principles	Project initiation documents address sustainable development	100% of project initiation documents approved take account of sustainable development principles	80%	100%
Policy	SMT decisions ensure that the organisation operates in a sustainable way	SMT reports for decisions	100% of SMT reports requiring decisions take account of sustainable development principles	80%	100%
Policy	Policy reviews consider sustainability issues and make recommendations for improvement	Completed policy reviews	80% of policy reviews demonstrate considered sustainability in the review and learning points	80%	100%
Operations	SDNPA reduces overall GHGs ¹ from its operations (IT, mileage, vehicles, lighting etc)	Greenhouse gas emissions (Defra methodology)	x % reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (Defra methodology)	Update baseline after move to SDC ²	tbc
Operations	SDNPA reduces its tonnes of CO ₂ from its operations	Tonnes of CO ₂ (Defra methodology)	x tonnes reduction of CO ₂	Update baseline after move to SDC	tbc

¹ Greenhouse Gasses

² South Downs Centre

Theme	Outcome	Measure(s)	Target/milestone	Yearly targets	
				2013/14	2014/15
Operations	SDNPA reduces its energy consumption	Energy use (KWh)	target to be set and initiated in 2015/16	Update baseline after move to SDC	tbc
Operations	SDNPA increases the proportion of its buildings which have a high standard of environmental performance	% of SDNPA owned and leased buildings with BREEAM ³ 'very good' rating	x % increase in SDNPA owned and leased buildings with BREEAM 'very good' rating	Update baseline after move to SDC	tbc
Operations	Reduce SDNPA water consumption	Volume of water used for each office/per capita	x % reduction	Update baseline after move to SDC	tbc
Operations	Reduce SDNPA paper consumption	Volume of paper ordered for each office/per capita	x % reduction	tbc	tbc
Procurement	SDNPA increases the proportion of its energy sourced from renewable sources	Energy sourced from renewable sources	x % increase in energy sourced from renewable sources	Update baseline after move to SDC	tbc
Procurement	Increase proportion of water used from sustainable sources	Installation and monitoring of rainwater harvesting	To be included in SDC refurbishment (August 2013)	Monitor rainwater harvesting	Monitor rainwater harvesting
Procurement	Increase the % of stationery items purchased from sustainable, green or	% of stationery items purchased from sustainable, green or ethical	Equal or exceed quarterly industry	Equal or exceed	Equal or exceed

³ Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method

Theme	Outcome	Measure(s)	Target/milestone	Yearly targets	
				2013/14	2014/15
	ethical sources	sources	norm for our sector	industry norm	industry norm
People	Increase car sharing for business journeys to reduce CO ₂ emissions from travel	Number of staff using car sharing schemes for business journeys	x % increase in staff participating in car sharing arrangements	tbc	tbc
People	Increase car sharing for commuting journeys to reduce CO ₂ emissions from travel	Number of staff using car sharing schemes for commuting	x % increase in staff participating in car sharing arrangements	tbc	tbc
People	Increased business journeys undertaken by cycling	% of staff who make journeys by bicycle	% making journeys by bicycle	tbc	tbc
People	Increased commuting journeys undertaken by cycling	% of staff who make journeys by bicycle	% making journeys by bicycle	tbc	tbc
People	Promote awareness and encourage sustainable behaviour among staff, Members and volunteers	Number of staff, Members and volunteers participating in 'green week' activities – this could be an annual event	70% of staff participating in green week activities	75%	80%
People	Encourage reduction in energy use through a 'switch off' campaign	Number of lights, copiers and terminals on when offices not occupied	80% of lights and ICT equipment off when office not occupied	80%	90%