

Report to	Policy and Resources Committee
Date	20 July 2017
By	Performance and Projects Manager
Title of Report	Year End Performance Report for 2016/17

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to

1) Receive and approve the Quarter 4 and 2016-17 year-end performance report

1. Summary and Background

- 1.1 In September 2016 the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) adopted a new five year corporate plan. It runs from 2016 to 2021. A new set of indicators and actions were developed to monitor delivery and impact over the period of the plan. The detailed performance measures and actions are at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 The **SDNPA** as a publicly accountable body, is responsible for monitoring its performance. The Policy and Resources Committee has terms of reference which include *"To monitor and review the performance, including financial performance, of the Authority in the context of its business delivery, and the management and maintenance of the Authority's assets in accordance with the Authority's agreed budget, Corporate Plan and other approved plans, and make recommendations for changes as appropriate"*. And *"To monitor and identify improvements arising from the outcomes and evaluation of projects identified by the Committee, audits, survey and other feedback and make recommendations as appropriate"*. This report provides an overview of performance for 2016 -17 which is the first year of the new corporate plan.
- 1.3 This report draws together a comprehensive overview of performance for 2016-17. It covers the Partnership Management Plan, the Corporate Plan, Projects and compliments, comments and complaints. It also includes information on how learning from projects and other performance information will be used to improve performance and practice.

2. Partnership Management Plan

- 2.1 Members should note that although it has been agreed that this information is reported annually, it will not always be possible to produce updated data on that cycle. This is because some of the data for the indicators is only produced on longer timescales, such as once every 5 or 10 years. Where this is the case it has been noted in the table. In addition, due to the nature of some of the indicators it may well be that it isn't possible to see any change in a single year. The detail can be found at **Appendix 2**.

3. Corporate plan

- 3.1 In addition to the information outlined above, general performance is captured via the measures in the [Corporate Plan](#). The majority of the measures (denoted with coloured squares in the appendix) were delivered to target, as were actions (denoted by coloured circles in the appendix). The detail and commentary on the measures and actions is in **Appendix 3**.
- 3.2 Of the 20 measures in the Corporate Plan, 11 are green, none are amber, one is red (but this is because of no data rather than poor performance) and 8 have no data. The reasons for no data in year one are, that we are in the process of setting baselines or things were

not due to be measured in 2016-17. Of the 25 actions in the Corporate Plan, 12 are amber and 13 are green. With nearly half being off track in some way. Officers will review these activities and put in place remedial measures if necessary.

4. Planning Performance

- 4.1 A source of concern in the 2015/16 year end report was the percentage of valid applications that were validated within 5 working days with figures of 47% and 51% reported in quarters 3 and 4 respectively. Although still well below our target of 90% this metric has improved significantly in the 2016/17 financial year to 60%. Across the year the SDNPA team achieved 70% validated within 5 days (and 85% in quarter 4), compared to 58% across the host authorities as a whole. There was relatively wide variation in host authority performance. Notwithstanding the significant improvement from 2015/16 to 2016/17, together with the continued improvement in speed of validation between the quarters of 2016/17, measures and monitoring are in place to drive higher performance in the timely validation of applications.
- 4.2 In terms of speed of decision making we are exceeding the targets required of us by Government for all categories of application. 92% of applications dealt with in the 2016/17 financial year (2,378 applications out of 2,588) were determined in accordance with statutory timescales, a significant improvement on the 80% achieved in 2015/16. Performance between the Authority's own planning teams and the host authorities is, overall, broadly comparable.
- 4.3 The Authority dealt with another 2,791 cases across the year on which we (in common with other local planning authorities) do not need to report our speed of decision making to the Government. These cases include some applications, pre-application enquiries and queries concerning whether or not planning permission is required. 74% of these applications were dealt with within the target time in 2016/17, compared to 64% in 2015/16.
- 4.4 Regarding planning appeals 67% of appeals in the financial year were dismissed, a small improvement on the 62% dismissed in 2015/16. Appeal performance remains below our target of 80% dismissed but our performance is broadly comparable with the national average. However, performance in relation to appeals requires attention and as part of efforts to improve our performance in this respect a review and evaluation of all appeal decisions (both those dealt with by the Authority itself as well as the host authorities) from April 2012 to the end of June 2017 is currently being undertaken by the Performance and Technical team. Findings and recommendations will be reported to Members and planning officers later in the year.
- 4.5 More detailed information about planning performance is set out in tables 1-6 of **Appendix 3**. These tables include data for the full financial year and show the comparative performance of our own planning teams and the host authorities.
- 4.6 An overview of SDNPA performance for the public, with case studies, is published in the Annual Review which is at **Appendix 4**.

5. Projects

- 5.1 The majority of SDNPA led projects have delivered well and are on track and on budget at the end of the year. Six projects were completed during the year. Of those, the majority were completed on time and on budget some were completed under budget. There were 2 exceptions. The Historic Landscapes of Hampshire project was late but on budget, as was the LSTF programme, see paragraph 7.2 and background papers below for links to relevant reports. The evaluation for the Alphabet Book is on the agenda for this meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.
- 5.2 In addition to the larger projects a number of smaller landscape and conservation based projects have been carried out, supported mainly by the Area Teams, these are referred to as Grassroots projects, and a link is included in the background documents. The details of project performance are at **Appendix 5**.
- 5.3 Two new projects were approved during the year, Active Access approved at OMT and by delegated authority to the Chief Executive, as there was no Committee meeting available before the bid had to be submitted. It was reported to the Policy and Programme

Committee in May 2017 (see link below), along with some funding to support the development of options for funding for the Big Chalk project.

6. Complaints compliments and comments

- 6.1 During the year the SDNPA has received 105 compliments about its services and 34 complaints. The largest numbers of complaints were about the Planning function. The complaints totals and trends remain consistent with previous years, however there is a need to ensure robust reporting and recording of complaints to ensure our internal processes are complied with. This work is already underway. Summary information about compliments comments and complaints are at **Appendix 6**.

7. Learning and improvement

- 7.1 An improvement plan has been developed taking information from a range of sources, most notably the Planning Service Customer survey but including project evaluations and performance information. Progress on the improvement plan is reported annually. The improvement plan for 2016-17 is at **Appendix 7**. All improvements from project evaluations have been completed as scheduled. There are a few items which are behind schedule for the Planning Service improvement plan, however they are programmed to be completed in the 2017-18 Financial year.

8. Governance Committee and P&P Committee Considerations

- 8.1 The Policy and Programme Committee have previously received the Grassroots map at their meeting on 25 May [Project report to Policy and Programme Committee](#) along with a general project update. The [Big Chalk project update](#) and [presentation](#) was reported to Policy and Programme Committee on 27 January 2017.
- 8.2 The evaluation report for Hampshire Historic Landscapes was reported to the Governance Committee on 21 February 2016 (see links below). The evaluation report for the LSTF was reported to Governance Committee on 05 July 2016 (see links below). The evaluation report for the Food and Drink Portal was reported to Governance Committee on 05 July 2016 (see links below). There was a Paper on Stanmer Stage I to the Policy and Programme Committee on 21 July 2016 (see links below).

9. Other Implications

Implication	
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	No
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	Implications of this report in itself do not raise an issue of value for money. However the projects that the organisation has funded are assessed for value for money when they are approved. Where appropriate, this is part of the project approval reports received by this Committee. Projects are evaluated individually for value for money when they finish. This is reported regularly to the Governance Committee.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	No
Has due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	Yes – as the subject matter of the report is an update on projects and funding no specific issues arise. Consideration of equalities issues are considered as part of the development of a project.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	No

Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy: 1. Living within environmental limits 2. Ensuring a strong healthy and just society 3. Achieving a sustainable economy 4. Promoting good governance 5. Using sound science responsibly	No – not directly although as part of the process for developing projects and when they are approved sustainability issues are included as part of the process. Similarly when the corporate plan is developed these issues are considered as part of the process of developing the plan.

10. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

10.1 Robust corporate planning and monitoring of performance are part of the mitigations for our corporate risk number 12 about awareness and favourability with decision makers.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Unforeseen changes to the level of funding provided by relevant Government departments for future years	Likely	Minor	A robust monitoring and project approval system and regular reporting to relevant Committees on projects and the budget available along with a corporate plan which sets clear priorities to support delivery of Partnership Management Plan outcomes.

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Appendices

1. Corporate Plan performance measures
2. PMP indicators
3. Corporate Plan indicators & planning data
4. Annual Review
5. Project update
6. Complaints comments and compliments
7. Improvement Plan

SDNPA Consultees Chief Executive; Director of Countryside and Policy Management; Director of Planning; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal Services, Head of Governance; Countryside and Policy Managers; OMT.

External Consultees None

Background Documents

- [NPA approval for the 2016-21 Corporate Plan](#)
- [Corporate plan Appendix 1](#)
- [Partnership Management Plan](#)
- [Grassroots map 2016-17](#)
- [Stanmer Park paper to P&P](#)
- [Food and Drink Portal evaluation](#)
- [LSTF evaluation](#)
- [Historic Landscapes of Hampshire evaluation](#) (At Appendix 2)