

Report to	Policy & Resources Committee
Date	19 September 2017
By	Director of Countryside & Policy Management
Title of Report	Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy

Recommendation: The committee is recommended to:

- 1. Consider the draft Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy and agree any changes required prior to its recommendation to the Authority for approval.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Director of Countryside Policy & Management, in consultation with the Committee Chair, to finalise the wording of the draft strategy incorporating any changes agreed by the Committee and to make any additional minor changes considered necessary prior to submitting the strategy to the Authority for approval.**

1. Background

1.1 The current Corporate Plan contains a commitment to develop a series of strategies which together will set priorities for delivering the next phase (2019-24) of the South Downs Partnership Management Plan (SDPMP). In addition to allowing the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) to identify its own priorities, the strategies are developed by SDNPA staff after extensive engagement with relevant stakeholders. This raises awareness of the SDPMP review with stakeholders to help define how they will contribute to the SDPMP over the same period.

2. Development of the strategies

2.1 In combination, the strategies will provide a guiding framework for the period up to 2024, replacing the current SDPMP delivery framework. The entire set will be discussed and endorsed by Members and the South Downs Partnership as part of the SDPMP review process, and agreed by the NPA in 2019. This work will then drive much of the content for subsequent SDNPA corporate plans. The 2019 timescale also allows time for partners to link their next cycle of corporate plans more closely to the SDPMP.

2.2 There are 5 strategies in development with a further 3 already in place (in italics) for which action plans are being developed. The strategies are as follows:
Landscape & Biodiversity; Cultural Heritage; Cycling and Walking; *Education and Outreach, Volunteering, Health & Wellbeing, Tourism and Rural Economy.*
Each strategy goes through a development process which includes, internal consultation, a Member workshop, a presentation to the South Downs Partnership and external consultation with relevant external partners.

3. Process to date

3.1 In the case of the Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy, the development process has included a Member workshop (23 March), workshop with the South Downs Partnership (26 April), sessions at a full staff meeting and with groups of staff as well as consultation with relevant external partners. These workshops have helped to shape the strategic outcomes in the strategy and ensure that all relevant work is captured in the action plan.

- 3.2 The Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy is attached at **Appendix I**. The Strategy sets out the Authority's ambitions for Landscape and Biodiversity across the National Park.
- 3.3 The Landscape and Biodiversity strategy has been developed using the ecosystem services approach adopted by the Authority across all of its strategic planning. The projects and work programmes will be driven by a two over-arching principles and will need to:-
- Enhance, and add value to, the stock of Natural Capital within the National Park area to include development of a coherent and resilient ecological network that benefits both wildlife and people.
 - Protect, restore or enhance the priority Ecosystem Service Functions delivered within the National Park at a landscape scale.
- 3.4 The strategy identifies priority ecosystem services which are important in the National Park including pollination, carbon stocks and water quality. These priority services have been developed into a set of strategic outcomes.
- 4. Prioritisation and developing an action plan.**
- 4.1 An action plan is being developed that takes into account the following areas of work;
- capturing key contributions from business as usual,
 - current project work that is ongoing and
 - New areas of work that will be subject to the availability of resources.
- 4.2 All actions will be prioritised on the basis of the following criteria;
- Adding to the stock of Natural Capital,
 - Delivery of priority ecosystem services and contributing towards the strategic outcomes.
 - Potential delivery mechanisms
- 4.3 Members are requested to consider the strategy and the priorities and agree them or suggest any changes they think should be made to the strategy or action planning priorities.
- 5. Other Implications**

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	Yes. Approval of the strategy by the Authority. As specific proposals arising from the strategy are developed, the relevant SDNPA Committee may be required to approve match funding or in kind support for larger projects.
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	Proposals in strategies will be monitored by development of expressions of interest for each. These set out in broad terms the resource implications and whether match funding or in-kind support is required to deliver each one.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	Any projects arising directly from the implementation of the strategy will be subject to usual VfM tests.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	None directly from the report and any procurement exercises that are entered into as a result of projects proposed in any strategy will be undertaken when it is required.
Has due regard been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	An equalities impact assessment (here) has been carried out for each strategy and approved by the Director of Countryside Policy and Management.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	None

Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	None
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	The Strategy will assess the sustainability implications of any proposal within it. The strategy itself are all based on the principles of sustainability.

*[If 'Yes' please explain – if a lengthy explanation is required this may need to become a separate paragraph]

6. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
The development of strategies are a means of reducing risk that the resources the SDNPA has available to deliver the PMP are used in the most effective way possible.	2	4	An extensive consultative process sits behind the development of the strategy. An internal quality control mechanism is in place to make sure strategies are aligned and consistent.
Strategies are not aligned to PMP delivery Partner organisations do not support the strategy outcomes	2	3	Consultation with external partners helps to raise awareness of SDNPA priorities and understanding of partner roles in contributing to strategy outcomes.

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Appendices
SDNPA Consultees I. Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy
Chief Executive; Director of Planning; Chief Finance Officer;
Monitoring Officer; Legal Services.

External Consultees As part of the development process strategies are shared with the South Downs Partnership and relevant stakeholders.

Background Documents [SDNPA Corporate Plan](#)
[Partnership Management Plan](#)
[Equality Impact Assessment](#)

