

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

Recommendation: The committee is recommended to:

- 1. Consider the revised draft Cycling and Walking 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 revised strategy incorporating any changes agreed by the Committee and to make any additional minor changes considered necessary prior to submitting the revised 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 SDPMP 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. A further 3 (in italics) are already in place and action plans are being developed for these. The strategies are as follows: Landscape & Biodiversity; Cultural Heritage; Cycling and Walking; *Education and Outreach*, *Volunteering*, Health & Wellbeing, *Tourism* and Rural Economy.
- 2.3 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 Cycling and Walking Strategy, the development process has included: staff workshop sessions, a Member workshop in January 2017, consultation with the Local Access Forum and informal discussions with key officers in partner Local Highway Authorities.

Together these workshops have helped to shape the strategic outcomes in the strategy and ensure that all relevant work is captured in the action plan. At the January workshop, Members agreed the outline structure and themes for the Cycling and Walking Strategy. Draft theme objectives were evaluated, with strong support emerging for the promotion of the National Park as a cycling and walking destination; the development of key leisure paths such as Centurion Way and for improving and increasing utility paths in towns and villages.

3.2 The resulting **Cycling and Walking Strategy** is attached at **Appendix I**. It sets out the Authority’s ambitions for cycling and walking across the National Park, identifies how the Authority will prioritise projects for delivery, and proposes an action plan for the next five years. Objectives and actions fall into three main areas: Policy and Development, Access Network and Economic and Social activities. Together these actions are designed to deliver two main outcomes: a network of high quality access routes and a welcoming environment for cycling and walking experiences. The importance of partnership working is also highlighted in the strategy which identifies both Local Authority partners and community stakeholders.

4. Feedback from last Committee meeting and Priorities

4.1 Members considered an earlier version of the draft Cycling and Walking Strategy at the [July meeting](#) of Policy and Resources Committee. Discussion focused on the need for clearer prioritisation. Accordingly, the Delivery Action Plan has been updated as follows:

4.2 The 14 items in WHITE are ‘Business as Usual’: actions or activities to be delivered, for example, through the day to day management of the planning system.

4.3 The 9 items in LIGHT BLUE are currently ‘live’ with identified staff resource and funding. These include delivering a programme of ‘Walk the Downs’ and ‘Ride the Downs’ initiatives (part of ESCC’s DfT funded Active Access programme 2017-20) as well as on going feasibility work on the Centurion Way path

4.4 The 21 items in DARK BLUE are dependent on the availability of additional staff resource and, in some instances, additional budget requirement. These are, for the most part, new actions not yet underway. Of these, **seven are identified as high priorities for delivery in the next five year period** and are shown in the table below.

4.5 Priority Actions in Cycling and Walking Strategy

Obj no.	Objective	Priority Action
AN2	Develop the network of Non-Motorised User (NMU) leisure paths along former railway alignments as opportunities and funding permits	AN2.2 Evaluate and prioritise leisure route opportunities on former railway lines and other routes to establish resource requirements, partnership opportunities and stakeholders.
		AN2.3 Pursue feasibility and capital funding and allocate resources to undertake preliminary work on prioritised routes.
AN3	Add community led access schemes, which support SDNPA purposes, to SDNP Infrastructure Business Plan (IBP) list if they are suitable for CIL funding.	AN3.2 Develop a support and guidance framework to assist communities in progressing access schemes identified in Neighbourhood Plans and the IBP list to ‘construction ready’ status.
		AN3.3 Develop a mechanism to prioritise access schemes on the SDNP IBP list for resource allocation and potential CIL or other funding.
AN4	Improve the accessibility and quality of key leisure routes for NMUs.	AN4.2 Deliver added value to LHA Rights of Way Improvement Plans (RoWIPs) through a Miles without Stiles/Access for All programme including the removal of stiles, other barriers and surface improvements.
AN6	Improve cross-town utility paths and commuter routes for NMUs.	AN6.1 Identify and support opportunities within markets towns to develop schemes that enhance NMU connectivity to centres of employment, services, amenities, public transport and the access network.

Obj no.	Objective	Priority Action
ES2	Develop a SDNP tourism offering and promote the National Park as a cycling and walking destination	ES2.2 Rollout itineraries within the Discover England Fund 'Make great memories in England's National Parks and Countryside' programme (starts Sept 2017).
ES3	Support businesses, organisations and communities in the National Park and at gateways to increase cycling and walking facilities and services	ES3.1 Deliver a park wide Cyclists and Walkers Welcome scheme in 2018/19 based on the 2017 pilot scheme for in Petersfield and Lewes.

- 4.6 Delivery of these seven priorities is shared across several teams within the CPM Directorate, with Tourism and Rural Sustainable Economy leading on the ES2 and ES3. Delivery will always be dependent on the availability of staff resource and securing sufficient funding if appropriate. Outstanding un-prioritised actions remain part of the overall Ambition for Cycling and Walking in the National Park and will be taken forward as resources allow.
- 4.7 Members are requested to endorse the updated strategy and the priorities identified above and agree any changes they think should be made to the strategy or action plan priorities before recommending to the NPA

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	The Strategy will assess the sustainability implications of any proposal within it. The strategy itself are all based on

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 principles of sustainability.
---	-----------------------------------

6. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
4.1 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.

ANDREW LEE

Director of Countryside Policy and Management South Downs National Park Authority

Contact Officers: Allison Thorpe, Strategy Lead Access and Recreation
Alister Linton-Crook, Cycle Projects Officer

Tel: 01730 819243/819247

email: allison.thorpe@southdowns.gov.uk

Alister.linton-crook@southdowns.gov.uk

Appendices I. Cycling and Walking Strategy

SDNPA Consultees Chief Executive; Director of Countryside Policy and Management; 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 [SDNPA Corporate Plan](#)

Documents [Partnership Management Plan](#)

Equality Impact Assessment