

Report to	Policy and Resources Committee
Date	19 September 2017
By	Performance and Projects Manager
Title of Report	Quarter 1 Performance Report 2017-18

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to

- 1) Receive the Quarter 1 performance report**
- 2) Consider if it wishes to make any recommendations to Officers arising from the report**

1. Summary and Background

- 1.1 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”*.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on performance during Quarter 1 of 2017 -18.

2. Performance reporting

- 2.1 An overview of performance for each of the 4 objectives in the Corporate Plan is at **Appendix I**. Members will note that a new format has been used. This is in response to feedback from the last meeting of this Committee and following discussions with individual Members. An overall RAG status has been used for overall performance against the four areas of work, strategy, partnerships, projects and core work. Notable successes and areas requiring further work are listed for each. Members are asked for feedback on the revised approach.
- 2.2 In general, performance is sound and good progress is being made across the board. There are a few areas where performance is behind initial estimates for completion. The development of strategies is one area where increased engagement and feedback from Members has meant that we have decided to take more time to develop them. Another is that the timetable for the review of the Partnership Management Plan (PMP) has been revised, and a number of strategies now have longer lead in times than they did before. In addition, there are a number of new staff in post and it is appropriate to allow time for them to get up to speed and then take the work forward in an effective way.
- 2.3 The Public Affairs Strategy is being developed alongside an update of the Communications & Engagement Strategy. A timetable is now in place for it to come before the National Park Authority in December 2017. The strategy was delayed by a number of months due to the Brexit vote and snap election which made the external environment uncertain and a decision

was taken to wait until after the election to begin work on bringing together the strategy. A comprehensive engagement process has also taken time, but will be repaid in the quality of the strategy when finalised.

- 2.4 Planning performance remains good with the speed of decision making continuing to be in excess of Government targets with 94% of statutory cases in the quarter determined within the Government's target time. Appeal performance dipped slightly in the quarter with 54% of appeals dismissed against 67% dismissed in the 2016/17 financial year.
- 2.5 The speed of validation of planning applications remains a source of concern with just 53% of cases validated within 5 days against a target of 90%. Improving this performance remains a focus of attention.

3. Projects

- 3.1 The RAG (Red, Amber and Green) status shows if a project is on track or not. The RAG status is entered manually by staff and is based on an assessment including key deliverables and achievement of targets as well as whether the budget is on or off track. If a project is behind or ahead with delivery or behind or ahead with budget, it will be amber. If it is both off track in terms of delivery and also in terms of budget it will be red. The arrows within the coloured sections show the direction of travel from the previous Quarter.

↓	Downward arrow indicates that performance is lower or worse than the previous reporting period
—	A dash indicates no change from the previous reporting period
↑	Upward arrow indicates that performance is higher or better than the previous reporting period

- 3.2 The majority of SDNPA led projects have delivered well and are on track and on budget at the end of the quarter. 4 projects were completed during the quarter. Of those, 2 were completed on time and on budget. They were the Rural West Sussex Partnership and the Strategic Stones Study. Secrets of the High Woods completed on time and slightly under budget. The interpretation at the Weald and Downland Museum was completed on time and under budget.
- 3.3 Of the 12 remaining projects, 5 are amber status, and 7 are green. The Chalk Stream Mapping project for Hampshire was cancelled. This was because the methodology that had been used in Sussex, by the same contractor, was difficult to replicate and could not be achieved within the remaining budget. The original contract had been to complete surveys of all priority chalk streams. Quotes obtained covered only a 5% sample of the remaining priority chalk streams and exceeded the remaining budget. Therefore, Officers decided it was not cost efficient and have repurposed the remaining budget.
- 3.4 One new project was approved during the quarter. Watercress and Winterbournes is a 2 stage Heritage Lottery Funded project being developed by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. It is a landscape partnership bid to improve and protect the internationally important headwater streams in the Test and Itchen catchment. The main area in the National Park is the Cheriton Stream and the Itchen around Tichbourne. The SDNPA will be involved in developing a community catchment plan for our headwaters, training volunteers and communities and assisting with interventions and landowner liaison. The total project cost is projected to be approximately £313,000. The SDNPA contribution is £12,000 over 7 years. Most of the expenditure is anticipated to be during the implementation phase in years 3-7 and will be spent in the National Park. The bid has been submitted and the result is due in December. Details of projects are at **Appendix 2**.

4. Governance Committee and P&P Committee Considerations

- 4.1 Heathlands Reunited was approved by the NPA at its meeting in March 2015 [npa_2015March26-Agenda-Item-12.pdf](#) following consideration by the P&P Committee in March 2015 [pp_2015March3-Agenda-Item-10.pdf](#)

5. 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 the Policy Resources Committee. Projects are evaluated individually for value for money when they finish, they are reported regularly to this 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 where relevant.
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.

6. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

6.1 Robust corporate planning and monitoring of performance are part of the mitigations for our corporate risk 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. Q1 Performance overview
2. Project progress update

SDNPA Consultees
Chief Executive; Director of Countryside and Policy Management; Director of Planning; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal Services, Governance and Support Services Manager; Countryside and Policy Managers, Planning and Technical Manager

External Consultees
None

Background Documents
There is a wealth of information about the Secrets of the High Woods Project on the SDNPA website [discover/heritage/secrets-of-the-high-woods](https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/discover/heritage/secrets-of-the-high-woods). Information about the rampion windfarm is on our website [rampion-offshore-wind-farm](https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/rampion-offshore-wind-farm)