

Report to	Policy & Resources Committee
Date	27 September 2018
By	Performance and Projects Manager
Title of Report (Decision)	Project Evaluation – Big Chalk

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Receive the evaluation at Appendix 1**
- 2) Agree if it wishes to make recommendations to officers as a result of the learning from the evaluation**
- 3) Agree that the learning from the evaluation be added to the improvement plan as set out in Appendix 2**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents one project evaluation for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee. The Committee is asked to consider the evaluation report and identify any recommendations it may wish to make as a result of the learning points and themes highlighted. The Committee is also asked to agree the corporate learning to be added to the improvement plan. This report contains 1 evaluation report.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1 Big Chalk project first reported to Members in March 2015 as part of a verbal update by the Director of Countryside and Policy Management (previously the Director of Strategy and Partnerships). The potential requirement for initial and longer term funding was reported to Members as part of the Mid-year project update Report in October 2015. (see background papers below).
- 2.2 The project was first proposed in 2015, see concept note at **Appendix 1**. The project was fully developed with a draft Project Initiation Document produced **see Appendix 2**. Funding was reserved in principle from the strategic Fund as set out in paragraph 3.1 below. As set out in the evaluation report at **Appendix 3** it was decided for various reasons not to take the project forward in its original form. This was at least partly due to the impact of the decision to leave the European Union; leading to lack of certainty around access to European funding streams for such large scale projects in future.
- 2.3 There is useful learning to be taken from the project and our approach to it. The main findings are that it was useful to apply the logical framework approach to the project. As a result of this project the SDNPA had a number of staff trained to carry out Log Frame sessions and one was successfully delivered to support the National Trust in the development of the Changing Chalk Project; which has been the subject of other reports to this Committee.
- 2.4 The opportunity to build relationships and foster collaborative working with the SDNPA and A.O.N.B.s has been very valuable, particularly in supporting a number of subsequent landscape scale projects.

3. Options & cost implications

- 3.1 In October 2015 it was noted that up to £150,000 would be needed over the following 5 years to support the Life Plus Bid if it went ahead. It was agreed to ring fence this amount in the Strategic Fund to support a future potential bid.
- 3.2 In June 2016 £25,000 was allocated by OMT/SMT to the project from the Strategic Fund to support the development of data collection and the initial technical support for developing a larger bid. The budget allocation was agreed for £10K towards a funding options paper, and a further £15K to fund shared research priorities between the Big Chalk partners
- 3.3 In June 2017 following an additional call for “traditional” LIFE+ projects under the Nature programme and under a new sub-programme for climate action the funding partners wanted to use £10,000 of the sum originally approved in June 2016 for consultancy work to bring a revised bid for this funding stream together, rather than the original very large project. That was approved and the remaining £15,000 was returned to the Strategic Fund.

4. Next steps

- 4.1 It is likely that the ideas developed by the wider partnership as part of the project will be taken forward in a number of different ways. Examples of this include; elements of the Changing Chalk project that the National Trust is developing and which members approved in March 2018; the Channel PES pilot ‘Payments for Ecosystem Services’ within the Rother Valley, for which the contribution of officer time was approved in May 2015. Another example is the Brighton ‘CHAMP’ project, which was approved in June 2015. It is anticipated that the ideas developed by the partnership will be taken forward.

5. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	None in addition to what has been set out in the report.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	Each project is assessed separately for value for money. Overall the project evaluated did represent either appropriate or good value for money.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	No
Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority’s equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	The Big Chalk project did not progress to delivery stage and therefore no equalities assessment was undertaken. The equalities implications of projects are considered as part of the project development process. Any issues raised as part of the evaluation will be monitored through the capture of learning points.
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 Data Protection implications?	No
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy	Learning from projects contributes to sustainability principle 2 ensuring a strong healthy and just society – considering social cohesion and wellbeing; principle 3 achieving a sustainable economy – considering impacts on or contribution to a sustainable economy; and principle 4 Promoting good governance – considering how to encourage active participation.

6. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
That learning from projects is not fully captured	2	2	Well understood mechanisms are in place to capture information about the progress of projects and identifying learning through evaluation. Evaluation reports and case studies are routinely produced.
Learning from projects is not fed into future project development	3	2	Improvement planning is in place but there is potential to review and improve how this takes place. Project specific learning is followed up by themed programme boards which meet several times a year. Corporate learning is beginning to be captured and disseminated in a more comprehensive way via a revised improvement plan and in any revisions to guidance that might be deemed appropriate.

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Appendices

1. Original concept for Big Chalk project
2. Original PID for Big Chalk Project
3. Evaluation report for Big Chalk

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

External Consultees None

Background Documents [Agreement to fund in principle 03 March 2015](#)
[2015/10/PP_2015 October-Mid year project report](#)

