

Agenda Item 11
Report PRI9/20-22

Report to	Policy & Resources Committee
Date	28 November 2019
By	Community Landscape Officer (Truleigh Hill)
Title of Report (Note)	Truleigh Hill Mid Project Review

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Receive and consider the mid- point project evaluation report (appendix 1) for the Truleigh Hill landscape project .**

I. Introduction

- I.1 This report presents the project mid-point evaluation for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee. Supplementary information also includes a *Mid-Point Project Evaluation Report (Appendix 1)* containing the *Intervention Highlights and priorities* outlining short, medium and longer term intervention options for landscape improvement and community engagement at Truleigh Hill.
- I.2 The Truleigh Hill Landscape Project commenced mid-2018, with delivery in line with the Project PID.
- I.3 This project represents a new way of working for the SDNPA, with the designated Community Landscape Project Officer working at depth across a reasonably small project area in comparison to SDNPA Ranger patches. Over year one of the project, the Project Officer has been working to a broad remit with the objective of dovetailing work at Truleigh Hill where possible with SDNPA policies and strategies as outlined in section 2 below.
- I.4 Although the project has focused on a reasonably small geographical area, the project has thematically worked at breadth, working across a number of themes including:
- Access and Infrastructure
 - Enforcement and Antisocial Behaviour
 - Volunteering, Learning, Education and Community
 - Leisure, Recreation, Health and Wellbeing
 - Heritage and Culture
 - Habitats, Biodiversity and Landscape Character
- I.5 A key element of the project has been to involve the local community and local stakeholders in the decision making process, in order to aid the SDNPA in creating a shared vision for Truleigh Hill, which will achieve sustained activity, protection and improvement in this part of the national park. Over year one, the project has employed a number of different mechanisms to consult with the local community and stakeholders including:
- Formal public consultation events.
 - Talks and presentations to community audiences and local interest groups.
 - Face to face meetings with local residents and key stakeholders.

- Targeted engagement with schools, community groups and underrepresented audiences.
- Online surveys to capture public opinion.

2. Policy Context

2.1 As a result of the broad focus of the Truleigh Hill Landscape Project, it addresses a number of the Outcomes and Priorities from the SDNPA PMP 2020-25, the outcomes listed below are expanded upon within the accompanying *Mid-Point Project Evaluation Report (Appendix I)*.

- Purpose 1: Enhance: Outcome 1.1 and 1.2 – Outcome 2.1, and 2.2 – Outcome 3.1 and 3.2 – Outcome 4.1 and 4.2
- Purpose 2: Experience: Outcome 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 – Outcome 6.1 – Outcome 7.1 – Outcome 8.1
- Duty: Thrive: Outcome 9.2 – Outcome 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3

2.2 Additionally the project has worked to complement the following SDNPA strategies:

- Cycling and Walking Strategy 2017 – 2024
- Learning Outreach Strategic Review 2018 – 2023
- Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2015 – 2020
- Volunteer Development Strategy 2018 - 2023

2.3 The project also complements the focal areas and proposals identified within the 2019 DEFRA Landscape Review.

- Landscapes Alive for Nature and Beauty: Proposals 1, 2 and 3.
- Landscapes for Everyone: Proposals 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14.
- Living Landscapes: Proposals 17 and 19
- New Ways of Working: Proposal 25

3. Issues for consideration

3.1 **Outcomes/Outputs:** The project is on track to deliver the majority of the identified outputs. The Project Steering Group is currently evaluating the Action Plan to identify priority projects to be delivered as a part of phase two.

Outcome 7 – Removal of Telecommunications Equipment/Tower is the only outcome which is unlikely to be achieved within the initial project timescales, although telecommunications companies have been engaged and there may well be options to consolidate towers in the future should any reach the end of their lifespan.

3.2 **Budget:** Project interventions which have been identified within the Action Plan exceed the current allocated project budget. Therefore consideration needs to be made by the P&R Committee through a recommendation from the Project Steering Group, if additional funding and resources should be allocated to the project either in year two or beyond to support project legacy.

3.3 **Enforcement and antisocial behaviour:** The Project Officer has aimed to work in a positive and collaborative way with stakeholders and landowners in the project area, where there are opportunities for significant landscape improvement. Unfortunately where there has been a lack of willingness to engage with the project, consideration may still need to be given to enforcement action in year two to achieve the desired outcomes.

4. Options & cost implications

4.1 The Summary Project Intervention Highlights and Priorities Plan (within **Appendix I**), outlines identified project interventions with budgetary requirements, under each project theme. The proposed interventions exceed the allocated project budget (the project budget was set at £84,000.00). Therefore it will fall to the Project Steering Group to identify priority projects which meet available budget, or to recommend the allocation of additional budgets to meet full scope of recommendations.

4.2 In order to achieve a lasting impact and longer term sustainability of activity at this gateway

site, it is the recommendation of the Project Officer, that the SDNPA considers contributing match funding in support of partnership initiatives such as the Sustrans/Wildlife Trust **Bike it Wild** project, where there are opportunities to sustain engagement and lever in external funding to support National Park initiatives. This will be subject to the usual SDNPA project process.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 It is requested the P&R Committee reviews and comments on the attached *Mid-Point Project Evaluation Report (Appendix I)* which provide further details of the next steps of the project, community feedback and intervention options across project themes.
- 5.2 Due to an unforeseen period of sickness of the Project Officer during August/September 2019, there has been some slippage to the project timeline. As a result of this it is noted that the project has been granted a small time extension to maximise on the project opportunities and impact.
- 5.3 Funding for this project was agreed at the P&R Committee meeting on March 29th 2018, with a funding award of £84,000.00

6. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	Yes – Project End Report/Evaluation.
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	The question of project sustainability has been raised, in that it was always an objective of the project to achieve sustainable outcomes and ongoing engagement beyond the initial two year lifespan of the project. It will be the role of the Project Steering Group to further explore project sustainability during the second phase of the project and make the appropriate recommendations to the committee as a part of the Project End Report/Evaluation.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	The Project Officer is exploring opportunities for levering in external funding to support the sustainability of the project beyond the initial two year period. This may involve SDNPA providing a match funding contribution to project stakeholders/partners in order to assist them in securing external funding and adding value. This will be subject to the usual SDNPA project process.
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?	Yes. As a part of the educational and community engagement theme areas of the project, the Project Officer is actively exploring opportunities to engage underrepresented groups and audiences as participants and beneficiaries of the project. The project is specifically targeting vulnerable groups including the elderly and those at risk of loneliness and isolation, people with learning disabilities, adults with mental health support needs and those referred through local social prescribing networks, as well as vulnerable and marginalised youth.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the	No.

proposal?	
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	Yes. There are ongoing issues of antisocial behaviour and environmental and other crime occurring at the project location. The Project Officer is working closely with the Wildlife and Heritage Crime Officer in Sussex, the Youth Safety and Intervention Team and also the Rural PCSO from the Prevention Team in Sussex to address the ongoing issues and come up with strategies to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information.
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:	A key objective of the project has been to provide equality of opportunity at Truleigh Hill, which meets the principle of Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society. As the project continues, the Project Office and Steering Group will be evaluating any barriers which have a limiting impact on participation within the South Downs National Park.

7. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Full scope of landscape improvements not achieved due to slippage.	3	3	Short project extension.
Lack of continued community engagement during phase two and beyond project end point.	3	4	Continue to engage additional new audiences during phase 2. Explore match funding external partners to continue delivery following project completion.
Full impact of project not captured/realised.	2	4	Ensure data is captured from project partner for comprehensive evaluation.

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Appendices I. Mid-Point Project Evaluation Report
SDNPA Consultees Truleigh Hill Landscape Project Steering Group.
External Consultees Truleigh Hill Stakeholder List
Background Documents Award Letter –
(Available on Request) PID –
Q2 Project Report -
Draft Landscape Assessment –
Draft Action Plan –
Bike It Wild (Film and evaluation)
[2019 DEFRA Landscape Review.](#)