

**Agenda Item 18**  
**Report PR20/21-08**

Report to	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>
Date	<b>16 July 2020</b>
By	<b>Funding Coordinator</b>
Title of Report (Note)	<b>Annual Review of the Sustainable Communities Fund</b>

**Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:**

**1. Note the year-end position of the Sustainable Communities Fund**

**1. Summary and Background**

- 1.1 The report provides an overview of the [Sustainable Communities Fund](#) (SCF) for the year. The SCF is a rolling fund established to provide grants to community and voluntary groups, social enterprise organisations and businesses for 'not for profit' projects. To ensure proper scrutiny and well informed decision making an advisory panel, chaired by SDNPA member Doug Jones, advises on bids for funding between £2,000 - £10,000.
- 1.2 The Sustainable Communities Fund's application rounds have been closed and postponed in March in parallel with the lockdown. Project development and support continues in anticipation for when the lockdown is lifted and community of this nature projects can commence.
- 1.3 At its meeting on the 16 October 2018 the National Park Authority agreed to transfer the Sustainable Communities Fund along with its remaining balance to South Downs National Park Trust. The Trust is fundraising to match the amount transferred by the Authority in order to invest approximately £200,000 into an endowment. A portion of the return from the endowment will be used to run the annual grants programme whilst the remainder is re-invested so that the endowment can grow and, in time, offer more funding than would have been possible through the Authority alone. Both the Authority and the Trust will be recognised as founding patrons of the fund in perpetuity.
- 1.4 £100,000 matched funding was raised for the endowment and this was combined with the Trusts £90,000 reserve which along with the SDNPA's investment makes up the endowment. Fundraising for the SCF is paused due to current concerns around market volatility but we anticipate this will pick up towards the end of the year and assuming recovery from COVID continues we are confident that Trust will be making a further investment in the endowment towards the end of the year.
- 1.5 Since its inception in 2011 the fund has supported 202 projects with £1,164,439 of grant funding.

**2. Issues raised by members in advance of the meeting**

- 2.1 A version of this report was circulated to 2019/20 P&R Committee Members in advance of the Committee. Answers to questions and comments raised have been incorporated into the final report.

### 3. Sustainable Communities Fund

- 3.1 The Sustainable Communities Fund has committed £14,748 to 7 new sustainable community projects in 19-20. The projects are listed with a brief description in **Appendix 1** along with a map showing the 19-20 allocations in **Appendix 2** and second map showing all allocations throughout the life of the fund in **Appendix 3**.
- 3.2 The Sustainable Communities Fund currently has an annual budget allocation of £35,000 which, due to the lockdown period, leaves an underspend of £20,252 for 19-20. This means that the grant panel will have a budget of £55,252 to allocate to projects in 20-21.

### 4. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
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 this Committee. Projects are evaluated individually for value for money when they finish. This is reported regularly to the Policy and Resources Committee.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	No
Has due regard 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.
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.

## 5. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

5.1 There are no significant risks associated with the subject matter of this report. All projects funded from the Strategic Fund have their own risk registers, which are monitored regularly.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
The return on the endowment investments could reduce due to changes to the economy	Likely	Major	Investment manager, Quilter Cheviot, appointed through recruitment process. The Trust's Treasurer is an investment manager and sits on an Investment Committee which regularly reviews the portfolio's performance. During COVID19 quilters have continued to outperform the market and the current value of the Trust's portfolio (as of 22/07/2020) stood at £330k down from the £332 invested. None of the investments are fixed and the investment committee annually reviews whether the current manager and strategy is delivering the best return.
Reputational risk if we are unable to provide cash match funding for some of our larger projects	Possible	Moderate	Work to generate income for the South Downs National Park and also potentially for the SDNPA.  A robust monitoring and project approval system and regular reporting to this Committee on projects and the budget available

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Appendices

1. Approved 19-20 SCF grants and descriptions
2. Map showing 19-20 SCF grants geographically
3. Map showing all SCF grants geographically

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

External Consultees None

Background Documents