

**Agenda Item 19**  
**Report PR20/21-29**

Report to	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>
Date	<b>26 November 2020</b>
By	<b>Head of Governance and Support Services</b>
Title of Report <b>(Note)</b>	<b>Corporate Risk Register</b>

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

**I. Note the Corporate Risk Register as at November 2020**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Policy and Resources Committee has terms of reference which include "... to ensure the robustness of risk management and performance management arrangements; and to agree the Internal Audit Plan and Annual Report and receive progress and other relevant internal audit reports."
- 1.2 The Corporate Risk Register is reported to each meeting of the Committee. From June 2016 the corporate risk register has been monitored by the organisation's Operational Management Team on a monthly basis and issues escalated to Senior Management Team (SMT) as required.
- 1.3 At its meeting in September 2019 the Committee approved a new Risk Management Policy and Guidance document which has since been communicated across the Authority.

**2. Policy Context.**

- 2.1 Corporate Governance comprises the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved. It includes the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which public bodies are directed and controlled and through which they account to and engage with their partners, communities and citizens.
- 2.2 Risk management is a key aspect of corporate governance and is one of the 7 principles in the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (2016)' developed by Cipfa and SOLACE<sup>1</sup> to help public bodies make open, transparent and better informed decisions that take full account of risk and opportunities.

**3. Issues for consideration**

- 3.1 **Appendix 2** shows the risk register in a graphical way which allows Members to see, at a glance, the likelihood and impact of risks. Explanatory information is provided at **Appendix I** to this report.
- 3.2 The following significant changes have been made to the Risk Register since it was last considered by the committee:
  - Risk 16 (Staffing). Following discussions at the last meeting of the committee this risk has been updated to include mental health issues. A wide range of mitigations are already in place with regards to mental health and therefore the addition of this has not resulted in a recording of the overall risk

<sup>1</sup> Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy and Society of Local Authority Chief Executives & Senior Managers 291

- Risk 21 Projects—External facing (Delivery and Reputation). This risk has been updated to take into account the possible impacts of the ongoing pandemic, especially in relation to partners' ability to continue contributing to delivery of National Park priorities. This addition has resulted in a rescoring of the inherent and residual risk scores, and even with mitigations in place this is now the highest risk shown on the register. Due to the partnership nature of this risk the identification of significant mitigations to address this risk is a challenge and this risk will be kept under review by SMT and additional mitigations implemented and recorded on the register as they are identified.

3.3 Updates to mitigations and actions, where identified, across all risks are documented in **Appendix 2** to this report.

#### 4. Options & cost implications

4.1 Members are asked to consider and comment upon the Corporate Risk Register.

4.2 Management of risk is a key aspect of the organisation's governance and is undertaken within existing corporate budgets.

#### 5. Next steps

5.1 Further updates on the Corporate Risk Register will be brought to future meetings of the Committee.

#### 6. Other Implications

Implication	Yes/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	There are no additional resource requirements arising directly from this report. Any additional resources required for the delivery of identified mitigations will be subject to the Authority's usual decision making requirements.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	Effective risk management contributes to the efficient running of the organisation.
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?	There are no equalities implications arising from this report. Actions and mitigations are subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment where this is appropriate.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	There are no implications arising from this report.
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	There are no implications arising from this report.
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	There are no implications arising from this report.
Are there any Data Protection implications?	There are none
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy?	Effective risk management contributes to the principle of promoting good governance

#### 7. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

7.1 There are no direct risks arising from this report. The report outlines the current major risks facing the Authority and how they will be mitigated.

**ROBIN PARR**  
**Head of Governance**  
**South Downs National Park Authority**

Contact Officer: Robin Parr, Head of Governance  
Tel: 01730 819207  
email: [robin.parr@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:robin.parr@southdowns.gov.uk)  
Appendices: 1. Explanatory Information  
2. Corporate Risk Register  
SDNPA Consultees: Chief Executive Officer, Director of Countryside Policy & Management,  
Director of Planning, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer  
Background Documents: Previous Committee reports

## Agenda Item 19 Report PR20/21-29 Appendix I

### Explanatory Information for Risk Register:

Description	Likelihood of Occurrence
<b>Almost Certain (5)</b>	The event is expected to occur in most circumstances.
<b>Likely (4)</b>	There is a strong possibility the event will occur.
<b>Possible (3)</b>	The event might occur at some time
<b>Unlikely (2)</b>	Not expected, but a slight possibility
<b>Rare (1)</b>	Highly unlikely. It could happen but probably never will

Category	Example Descriptor of Impact
<b>Insignificant (1)</b>	Basic first aid required, less than £100 financial impact, reputation remains intact.
<b>Minor (2)</b>	Short term injury to 1 or 2 people, minor localised disruption lasting less than 24 hours, between £100-£1000, minimal reputation impact.
<b>Moderate (3)</b>	Semi-permanent disability, affects between 3-50 people, high potential for complaints, financial burden between £1,000 and £10,000, litigation possible.
<b>Major (4)</b>	Causing death serious injury or permanent disability. Service closure for up to 1 week, significant financial burden, national adverse publicity, litigation expected.
<b>Catastrophic (5)</b>	Multiple deaths, Financial burden over £100,000, international adverse publicity, widespread displacement of people (over 500), complaints and litigation certain.

### SDNPA Risk Appetite Statement:

The Authority seeks to operate within a limited overall risk range. The Authority's lowest risk appetite relates to safety including employee health and safety, with a higher risk appetite towards those activities directly connected with the Authority's Purposes and Duty. The Authority accepts that risk is ever present and is generally only willing to accept low levels of risk as part of its day to day business and in relation to its reputation. The Authority will normally only consider options where the level of risk can be managed to a low degree. However, the Authority may be willing to consider a higher level risk where it has the opportunity to be innovative in relation to its service delivery.

☐ = Inherent risk ( Risk before any action is taken)

✕ = Residual Risk ( Risk after mitigations in place)

### Corporate Risk Register

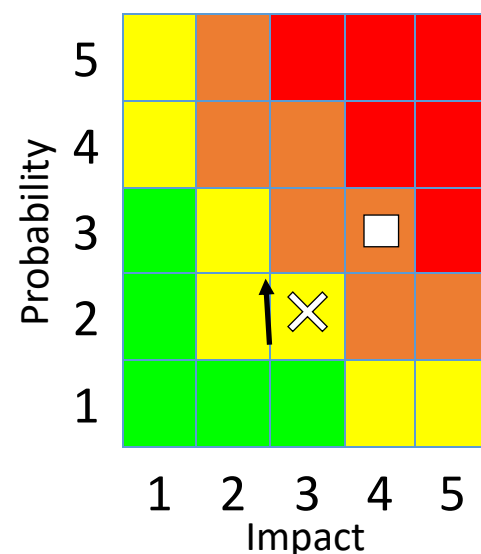
#### 01. Health and safety

**Owner:** Vicky Paterson

**Description of impact of risk:** Accident or incident involving staff, volunteers, visitors, members or the public resulting in serious injury or death at an SDNPA facility or event. Breach of statutory duties, litigation and cost against the authority. Impacts of Covid Pandemic.

**Mitigations:** 1. Services of external Health and Safety consultant retained. 2. H&S strategy and responsibilities agreed. 3. Health and Safety elements included in induction programme for staff and volunteers. 4. H&S committee operating and receiving regular accident reporting. 5. Health and Safety policy in place. 6. All area offices regularly audited. 7. Annual report to P&R Committee with recommendations. 8. Members and SMT trained and briefed on H&S responsibilities. 9. All risk assessments reviewed and updated. 10. Additional health and safety related training provided via e-learning—fire safety and health and safety delivered as mandatory courses. 11. IOSH training completed by all H&S reps. 12. Lone working policy agreed by OMT.13 internal health safety advisor in place to support existing contact. Risk registers and new procedure in place to support arrangements to recover from pandemic

**Updates:** risk assessments and new procedures developed for Covid pandemic. Staff welfare survey undertaken and results presented to management for action to develop post Covid recovery action plan. Mental health added to risk 16



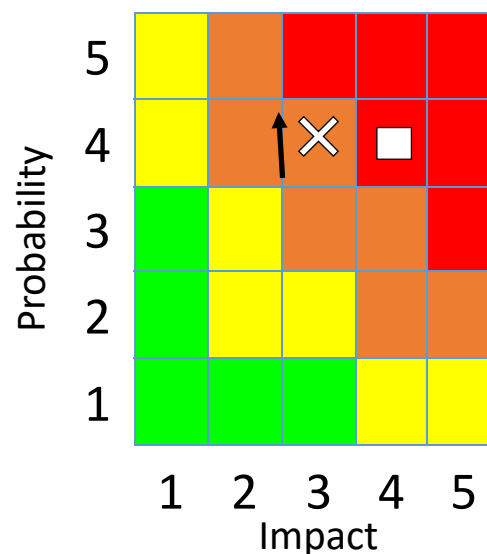
#### 02. Finance and budgets

**Owner:** Trevor Beattie

**Description of impact of risk:** Budgets insufficient or budgets become insufficient due to reduction in Defra grant or in-year requirement for savings; failure to match resources and workloads across the organisation; Management plan suffers and SDNPA lacks capacity to support other work. Resources not available to deliver on all priorities.

**Mitigations:** 1. Sufficient flexibility within revenue budget to enable shortfall to be at least partly managed. 2. Sufficient reserves to enable residual shortfall to be managed in short term whilst Medium Term budget adjusted . 3. Income Generation activity underway (see risk 22) to provide potential to raise income to meet shortfall 4. Effective planning and approach to the Budget setting process. 5. Monthly budget monitoring undertaken by managers and OMT, enables identification of areas of potential overspend and compensating savings.

**Updates :** Budget setting process completed for 2020/21..Process for 2021/22 underway and outcome of SR 2020 awaited.



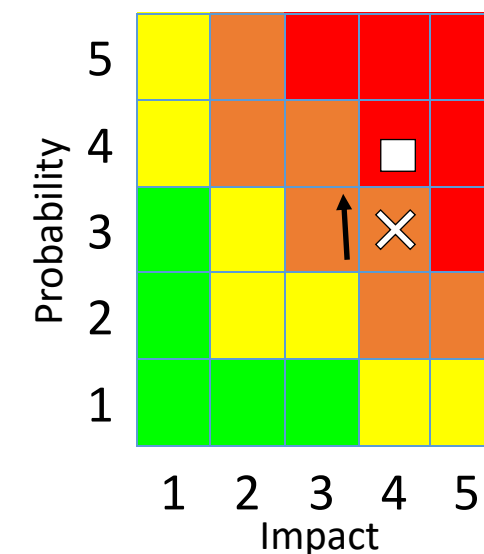
#### 07. Development Management

**Owner:** Tim Slaney

**Description of impact of risk:** Lack of capacity to manage development management function effectively results in unwanted developments not enforced against, lack of consistency, delayed decision making or an increase in planning appeals/inquiries. Significant additional costs to the Authority incurred and reputation damage and loss of confidence in the planning functions of the Authority.

**Mitigations:** 1. recruitment and retention practices 2. Staff pay and benefits scheme 3. Planning reserve in place. 4. training provided to host authority's. 5. s101 agreements in place 6 . Planning performance data reported to P&R committee and appeals info reported to Planning Committee 7.

**Updates:** . Authority response to planning white paper approved at NPA . Member workshop on white paper scheduled for September to inform NPA response to consultation



## Corporate Risk Register

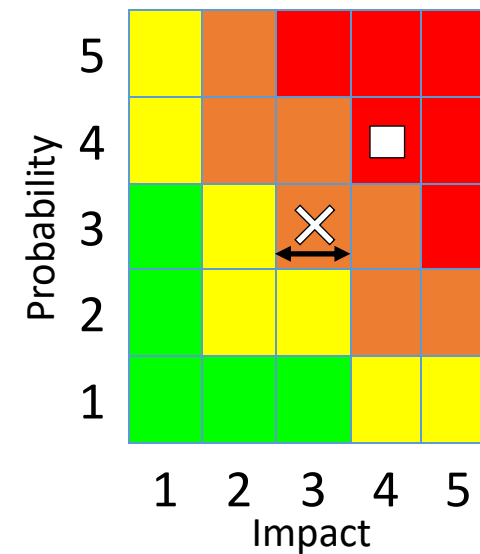
### 16. Staffing

**Owner:** Trevor Beattie

**Description of impact of risk:** Inability to attract/retain key staff impacts upon the organisation’s service delivery. High staff turnover results in inefficiency across the organisation. Mental Health issues affect staff performance and delivery.

**Mitigations:** New pay structure and terms and conditions post restructure, training and development programme, staff survey action plan, PDR policy, capacity regularly reviewed by OMT, Internal policies and procedures in place e.g. (Family friendly, flexible working). Staff survey to inform development of post-covid plan. Webinars available for all staff related to mental health and homeworking, regular communications through internal communications channels. Mental health first aiders in place, independent counselling and support resources available through simply Health. Staff health and wellbeing group in place.

**Updates:** measure put in place to support staff during Covid pandemic. Risk updated to include mental health issues and mitigations —no impact on scoring



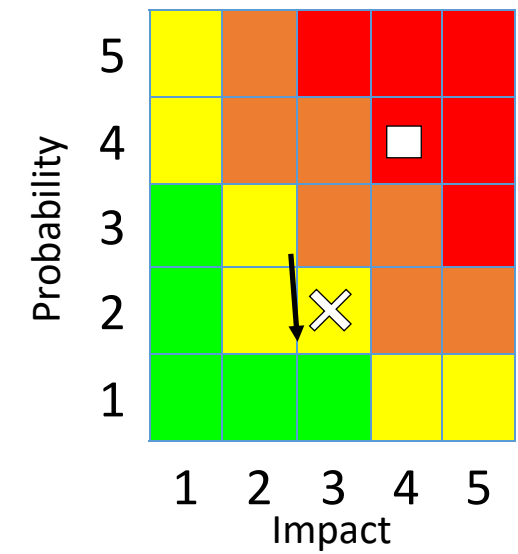
### 18. Projects - Internal Management

**Owner:** Trevor Beattie

**Description of impact of risk:** Project resources not optimised and opportunities to undertake projects are missed. Insufficient skills and capacity in the organisation to effectively develop, manage and deliver high quality projects. Opportunities to develop and deliver projects are missed, project resources are not used as effectively as possible, projects bought forward are of insufficient quality to deliver outcomes for the National Park.

**Mitigations:** Performance and Projects team in place. Prioritisation and approval process in place and audited. Guidance published on intranet, direct professional and expert support during project development and evaluation lessons learnt and performance reporting to committee. Thematic Boards operating. OMT role in decision making. Role of Strat leads, Rangers and other staff to identify opportunities and support is available to turn these into projects where appropriate. Project Manager is now in post and is undertaking a review of process and guidance and will recommend improvements where needed.

**Updates:** none



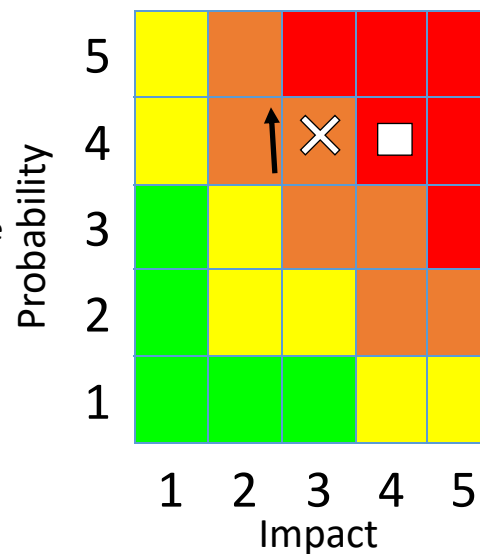
### 17. Brexit Transition

**Owner:** Andrew Lee

**Description of impact of risk:** Defra funding for SDNPA and National Park family under pressure as department takes on multiple priorities to develop post-CAP support package and repatriate complex basket of EU environment legislation. Level of protection for sites within NP weakened. Farm incomes threatened by unfavourable terms of trade, declining subsidies and shortage of casual labour. Land managers suffer loss of income from CAP Pillar 1 leading to undesirable changes in landscape management and increased pressure on our planning function due to rush to diversify income. Increased uncertainty holds back investment, increases pressure to remove environmental protections and multiplies calls for direct SDNPA support that do not accord with partnership model.

**Mitigations:** Close liaison maintained with other NPAs, with AONBs, NGOs and with central government departments to maximise information, advance warning and collective action. Members similarly on the alert within their own networks. Brexit fund allocated in SDNPA budget. Close liaison between NPE and Defra Ministers and officials, Natural England etc and NPE position statement lodged with Defra pre-election. Strong joint working between SDNPA and agencies, landowners, environmental NGOs, NFU and CLA in area.

**Updates:** Agriculture and environment bills awaited



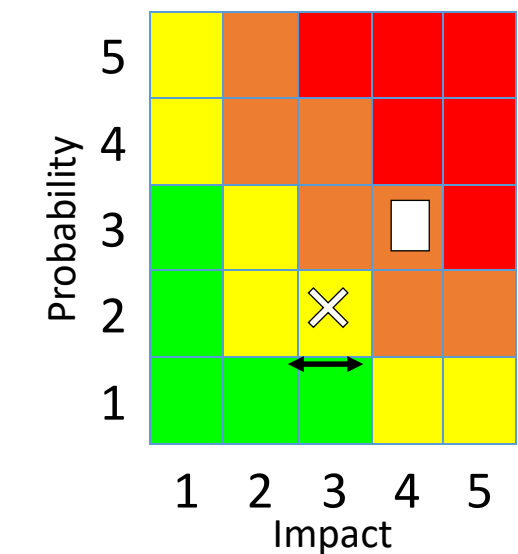
### 24. Major Infrastructure projects

**Owner:** Andrew Lee

**Description of impact of risk:** The NPA has insufficient resources to respond to Major infrastructure projects. The SDNPA is subject to legal challenge over its failure to adequately challenge a major infrastructure promoter in relation to our purposes.

**Mitigations:** Evidence based approach to infrastructure consultation responses adopted by NPA; additional resource employed (both through consultancy and staffing) to strengthen the authority's ability to respond to infrastructure projects; NPE protocol with Highways England; legal services contract in place;

**Updates:** none



## Corporate Risk Register

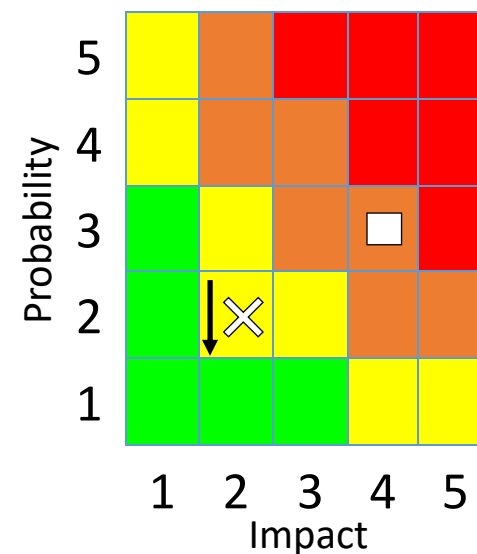
### 20. Business Continuity Planning and Organisational Resilience.

**Owner:** Trevor Beattie

**Description of impact of risk:** Lack of organisational business continuity planning and organisational resilience may prevent delivery of key services in the event of a major incident, or as a result of the loss of key staff.

**Mitigations:** BCP in place. Business Critical functions identified and planned for. BCP reviewed and tested annual. IT Disaster Recovery plans in place and tested annual. Key staff roles identified in BCP and communicated. 6 monthly review and annual testing of the plan in place. Potential single points of failure in organisation identified and mitigations in place including documenting of key processes. Specific implications of IT provision addressed through day to day IT support functions being provided via outsourced contracts meaning that user support would not be immediately impacted by the departure or absence of the IT Strategy Manager. IT network and key systems delivered externally via contracts. Network Resilience and continuity issues have also been addressed via the IT contracts. Linked to mitigations of risk 16 related to staffing.

**Updates :** BCP utilised in pandemic situation. Will be reviewed for lessons learnt once BAU resumed



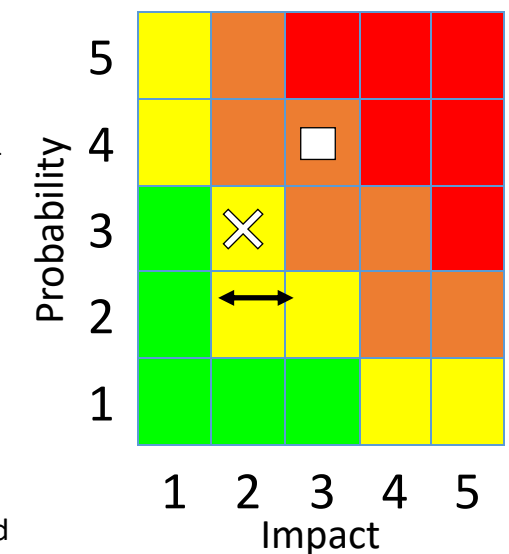
### 22. Income Generation

**Owner:** Trevor Beattie

**Description of impact of risk:** Insufficient income generation opportunities are identified to generate significant income to support NPA budgets. Insufficient skills /experience “in house” to exploit potential income generating opportunities. Challenge to commercial activity results in additional costs or reputational damage to the Authority.

**Mitigations:** 1. Governance framework for consideration of SDNPA powers in relation to commercial/income generation activity developed. 2. Seven Sisters project plan and business case 3. Sufficient reserves held to enable recruitment of staff with necessary skill set if required. 4.Skilled income generation team of four people operating well and meeting its targets

**Updates:** Recruitment for commercial manager completed . Decision on establishment of company scheduled for December NPA



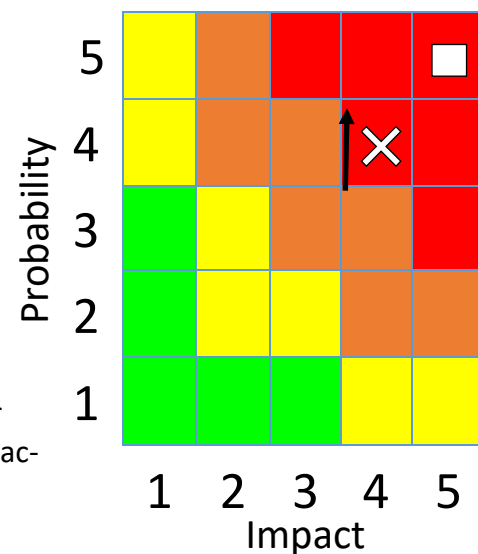
### 21. Projects—External facing (Delivery and Reputation) .

**Owner:** Andrew Lee

**Description of impact of risk:** failure to deliver key projects or NPMP outcomes and objectives due lack of resources, unrealistic expectations or alignment with partner business plans and /or Loss of commitment or ability to deliver from Partners due to Covid 19 impacts and recovery priorities and failure to maintain the profile and programmes of the National Park post COVID results in SDNPA reputation and influence with decision makers, partners and other stakeholders being negatively impacted.

**Mitigations:** PMP launched and new approach to budget setting implemented . Close engagement and strong continuous dialogue with partners on ongoing basis, including review and relaunch the SDP to build support for NPMP .Income generation activity underway. Public affairs strategy and proactive comms managing public expectations and setting out key messages for stake holders and partners. Robust project processes in place including enhanced project resources. Project evaluation and lessons learnt reported to committee. Engagement with Lawton Group to encourage closer working between national NGO’s operating within the NP. Work underway to encourage private investment into the National Park e.g.: Payment for Eco System Services and carbon trading. Ongoing engagement with national preparations to address risks arising from Brexit including Future of farming work and liaison with partners and central government. See also mitigations for Brexit Risk. Covid recovery fund established and funds allocated to support recovery across the NP

**Updates:** Risk updated and rescored to reflect potential impacts of pandemic . mitigations updated to include Covid recovery fund agreed to be allocated through TPB’s



### 23. Seven Sisters Country Park

**Owner:** Trevor Beattie

**Description of impact of risk:** Seven Sister Country Park project diverts focus and resources from other priority areas. Failure to effectively manage project impacts negatively on the Authority’s finances and reputation

**Mitigations:** New PMP developed setting out priority areas, and new approach to budget setting developed to support effective prioritisation of PMP outcomes. Corporate Plan places Seven Sisters within the context of the wider business of the Authority. Project board established. Project being run using well established and widely used Prince 2 (PProjects IN Controlled Environments) project management approach, business case and delegations agreed by NPA with appropriate mechanisms to return to NPA if required, regular project reporting P&R Committee . Project work streams and leads identified , resource management plans in place and overseen by SMT which will establish a separate team, under a dedicated manager to manage the site post acquisition . Stakeholder and comms plans in place

**Updates:** project board continues to over see progress and all actions on track at last project meeting . Heads of terms agreed , awaiting secretary of State Approval. Recruitment for commercial manager completed . Decision on establishment of company scheduled for December NPA

