

Report to **Policy & Resources Committee**
Date **23 November 2023**
By **Performance and Projects Manager & Project Management Lead**
Title of Report **Q2 Corporate Performance report 2023/24**
Decision

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

I. Receive and consider the Q2 Corporate Performance and Projects Report 2023/24.

I. Introduction

- I.1 The SDNPA considers it important as a publicly accountable body, to monitor its performance. The Policy and Resources Committee has terms of reference which include “To monitor and identify improvements arising from the outcomes and evaluation of projects identified by the Committee, audits, survey and other feedback and make recommendations as appropriate” and “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”.
- I.2 The committee also has “... oversight of bids for grant funding including to receive updates on the submission of bids for grant funding and the application of grants funds received”.
- I.3 Whilst the report calls on the committee to receive and consider the content of the performance report, the terms of reference for the committee include considering if the committee wishes to make any recommendations arising from its consideration of the report. Any such recommendations would be subject to a vote at the committee meeting.
- I.4 The purpose of this report is to update the Policy & Resources Committee on the Authority’s corporate performance during Quarter 2 (Q2) of 2023/24: 01 July to 30 September 2023.
- I.5 We report against PMP outcomes via the three High Level Target themed areas and five Corporate Plan priority areas, which includes **Grant Funding**. Key project information is also included in this report where relevant.
- I.6 This report also provides Members with a progress update for the actions from the Annual Governance Statement and the Human Resources and Health and Safety report (see sections 6 and 7).
- I.7 At the previous Committee meeting it was agreed that we move from quarterly to biannual corporate performance reporting. Further details, including a reporting schedule, are provided to Committee in a separate report.
- I.8 The Performance and Projects team have been working with an external consultant to develop a new system for tracking the performance of our projects and Corporate Plan

KPIs. Following an extensive testing phase over the summer, the new system, called “Performance Tracker”, will be rolled out for Q3. A staff training schedule is planned for November/December 2023 for everybody who will be using the system. The Performance Tracker will streamline the project approval process and simplify the way we collect project and performance data.

2. Progress against High level targets

2.1 Appendix I visually summarises Q1 & Q2 contribution towards the high level targets and Corporate Plan KPIs.

Nature Recovery

2.2 As an Authority we continue to use **multiple mechanisms** to work with landowners, managers and partners to deliver action for nature recovery (both ReNature and core nature).

2.3 **HLT#1: To secure an additional 13,000ha, or 33% of land managed for nature by 2030 from a baseline of 25%.**

2.4 Q1/Q2 progress against HLT1 has been monitored through key performance indicators outlined in Table I.

Table I Progress against HLT1: To secure an additional 13,000ha, or 33% of land managed for nature by 2030 from a baseline of 25%

| KPI | KPI Target (10 year target to 2030) | KPI contribution Q1/Q2 | Cumulative progress to date (2022 start) |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| HI.1 Total hectares of habitat created for nature | 13,000ha | 7ha | 411ha |
| HI.2 Total hectares habitat improved for nature | | 187ha | 4,499ha |
| HI.3 Total hectares legally secured via the ReNature credits scheme | | 663ha | 663ha |
| TOTAL | 13,000ha | 857ha | 5,573ha |
| HI.4 Total hectares land put forward for future nature recovery | N/A | 3,071ha | 3,071ha |
| HI.5 Total hectares of habitat creation and improvement funded by The South Downs National Park Trust | 2,000ha | Reported annually in Q4 | |

2.4.1 At the end of Q2, a total of 5,573 additional hectares of land have been secured or managed for nature since 2022. This is 42% of the 13,000 hectares target to be achieved by 2030.

2.4.2 Highlights of progress towards HLT1 in Q2 include:

- In Q1 and Q2, 857 hectares of land was either legally secured or newly managed for nature. Spring and Summer work primarily included sowing wildflower meadows through the Beelines project and the management of chalk grassland by the Area Teams. Grassland management, such as the “cut and collect” mowing regime at Pycombe Golf Course, has enabled a variety of wildflowers to re-grow and has provided habitat for bees, butterflies and other insects such as the Adonis Blue butterfly which has been recorded on the site this summer, along with a further 33 species of butterfly.
- South Holt Farm, a 307 hectare site, has been legally secured for ReNature through woodland restoration, creating a mix of woodland, open land and scrub.

- This half-year report covers the bird nesting season and growing/flowering time of year. We anticipate an increase in habitat management and interventions over the autumn/winter months which will be summarised in the Q4 2023/24 report.
- Habitat creation is reported cautiously as although significant tree planting and work to improve habitats is taking place, it can take many years before habitat can be considered as “created”.

2.5 HLT#2: Work to maintain, enhance and/or restore 30% of existing Core Nature sites and support key species recovery within the SDNP by 2030.

2.5.1 This HLT is measured using the indicators shown in Table 2.

Table 2 HLT2: Work to maintain, enhance and/or restore 30% of existing Core Nature sites and support key species recovery within the SDNP by 2030

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| <p>HLT2 Work to maintain, enhance and/or restore 30% of existing Core Nature sites and support key species recovery within the SDNP by 2030</p> | <p>H2.1 Total extent of Core Nature sites where SDNPA activity is contributing towards favourable condition Reported annually in Q4</p> <p>H2.2 Number of species recovery programmes developed for delivery from 2023*</p> |
|--|---|

*Shortlist of species to be determined in Q4 and target to be developed on announcement of Natural England Species Recovery Targets

2.5.2 A highlight of progress towards nature HLT2 in Q2 includes work on the Cockshut stream:

- The Cockshut is a 3km long chalk stream which flows into the Ouse just south of Lewes and forms part of Lewes Brooks SSSI. This project with Lewes DC, Adur & Ouse Rivers Trust and SDNPA has undertaken work to realign the stream into a new channel and create 6.8ha wetland habitat.
- Following a significant lead-in period to undertake feasibility work, design and secure all the necessary permissions and consents, the restoration project was completed in August 2023.
- The restored stream and associated wetland habitat will not only enhance biodiversity but help with flood management and carbon storage. Funding for the project delivery came from Lewes DC, SDNP-CIL and the Veolia Environmental Trust.

2.5.3 Update on HLT 2.2: A species prioritisation exercise was completed during Q1 which identified a shortlist of species to consider for long-term monitoring. This shortlist is now being refined in consultation with key colleagues and relevant partners/experts and will be finalised in Q4.

2.6 HLT#3: To prepare for and implement Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

2.6.1 This HLT is measured using the indicators shown in Table 3.

Table 3 HLT3: To prepare for and implement Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

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| <p>HLT3 To prepare for and implement Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)</p> | <p>H3.1 The requirement is for relevant applications to achieve at least a 10% biodiversity net gain increase from the pre-development biodiversity value.</p> |
|---|---|

- The new Planning Ecology Lead, Lynsey Robinson, joined the organisation in early July 2023. Work has progressed on the agreed actions for BNG readiness, particularly regarding staff and member training and systems/processes such as validation requirements.

- Work began in this quarter on the review of planning applications for the year 2022/23 period and BNG achieved, this will be completed in Q3.
- We still await the Government's Biodiversity Net Gain Regulations. In October 2023, it was announced by the Government that the legal requirement for mandatory BNG will be delayed until January 2024 and the associated regulations will be delayed until the end of November 2023.
- The Local Plan requirement the identification and incorporation of opportunities for BNG remains and readiness for mandatory BNG continues.

2.6.2 **Climate Action**

2.7 **HLT#4: South Downs National Park Authority to reduce its carbon footprint by 150 tonnes per annum in line with the 2030 net zero target**

2.7.1 This HLT is measured using the indicators shown in Table 4.

Table 4

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| <p>HLT4 South Downs National Park Authority to reduce its carbon footprint by 150 tonnes per annum in line with the 2030 net zero target</p> | <p>H4.1 Total annual SDNPA carbon emissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of SDNPA Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions using the DEFRA carbon calculation spreadsheet <p>Reported annually in Q4.</p> |
|---|--|

2.8 Q2 has seen preparation for an energy efficiency review of the South Downs Centre (SDC) and Seven Sisters Country Park (SSCP). The results of this review are due in Q3. This will help determine new baseline figures for the monitoring of carbon emissions (H4.1)

2.9 In early 2024, work will begin at the SDC (renewing the insulation and render) along with upgrades to the Ranger office, Turkey Barn and Camping Barn at SSCP. The recent addition of an additive to the heating systems at the SDC will reduce space heating energy consumption by up to 15%.

2.10 **HLT#5: 5% reduction per annum in the overall carbon footprint of the South Downs National Park from the baseline reported in 2019**

2.10.1 This HLT is measured using the indicators shown in Table 5.

Table 5

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| <p>HLT5 5% reduction per annum in the overall carbon footprint of the South Downs National Park from the baseline reported in 2019</p> | <p>H5.1 Total tonnes Co2 reported year on year in annual LULUCF (Forestry component) data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total, verified carbon savings achieved from accredited planting schemes under the Woodland Carbon Code (expressed as a % against the target). |
|---|--|

2.10.2 UK National Park Chairs and CEOs met on 21/22 September 2023 to discuss a response to the climate and nature emergencies. [Race to Zero](#) was a main focus of discussion. There remains a strong commitment to joining Race to Zero across all National Parks and the discussion resulted in some clear next steps. The UK National Parks have become the first in the world to join Race to Zero.

2.10.3 Eleven of the fifteen National Parks have now met the membership criteria with a pledge being made from the top of the organisation, in the form of a board decision. The remaining four National Parks are on track to discuss this with boards and to reach a decision by the end of the year or early 2024.

A National Park for All

2.11 A National Park for All Theory of Change model is being developed during 2023/24 which

will result in updated KPIs for this thematic area by the end of the year. Provisional KPIs have been agreed in the interim.

2.12 **HLT#6: Increase diversity of those engaging with the South Downs National Park**

2.12.1 This HLT is measured using the indicators shown in Table 6.

Table 6

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| <p>HLT6 Increase the diversity of those engaging with the South Downs National Park</p> | <p>H6.1 Percentage of people from underrepresented audiences engaged through volunteering activities.</p> <p>Underrepresented audiences include:</p> <p>Young people (aged 16-24);</p> <p>People from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse/global majority communities;</p> <p>People facing forms of health and access inequalities including disabled people;</p> <p>People living in urban areas, especially people facing socio-economic barriers to inclusion. (Urban settlements with areas of high deprivation broadly include the large settlements on the fringes of the SDNP – particularly the coastal settlements and Crawley and Horsham.)</p> |
| | <p>H6.2 Number of engagement activities targeted at underrepresented audiences</p> |

2.12.2 A new recording form is being developed to improve the demographic data reported about the number of people engaged through volunteering, project and engagement activities – this will be finalised by Q4. Improved data capture will provide a greater insight into the audiences that SDNPA primarily engage with and the impact of this work.

2.12.3 Highlights of progress towards HLT6 in Q2 include:

- In Q1/Q2, at least 48 “targeted” events were held engaging over 770 participants.
- Engagement events included working with MIND to offer walks to those experiencing mental health issues, carers and dementia support groups and Downs to the Sea project sessions helping those experiencing social isolation through creative workshops at Pulborough Brooks. Youth events included college careers fairs, 374 pupils from 7 schools were engaged through our school engagement programme and events via South Downs Youth Action partnered with Fittleworth Scouts and [Make Good Trouble](#) amongst others.
- Funding has been secured from University College London (UCL) Innovation and Enterprise for a Knowledge Exchange Partnership to develop a Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach and framework for cultural heritage, health and wellbeing, with a specific focus on participation in archaeology projects. The outcomes of this Knowledge Exchange will support the development of project work at Seaford Head hillfort, a site facing increased erosion due to climate change, by setting a tested methodology and approach towards capturing social return data from participants.
- Funding has also been secured by the University of Exeter and the National Trust from the AHRC/DCMS Cultural Heritage Capital programme to explore, research, test and trial Cultural Heritage Capital (CHC) accounting models, to parallel Natural Capital. The lead project team includes Forestry England, and SDNPA is one of three National Parks (alongside the Peak District and Lake District) participating as project partners.

2.13 **HLT#7: Work to make sure the landscape, scenery and tranquillity of SDNP is available to everyone, no matter what their access needs are.**

2.13.1 Q1/Q2 progress against HLT7 is monitored through key performance indicators outlined in Table 7.

Table 7 Progress against HLT7: Increase the diversity of those engaging with the South Downs National Park

| KPI | KPI Target (yrs 4-5) | KPI contribution Q1/Q2 | Cumulative progress to date |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| H7.1 Number of sessions facilitated by mobility equipment | 100 | 66* | 66 |
| H7.2 Metres of new and/or improved accessible path | Baseline to be established in 2023/24 | 4,550 | 4,550 |
| H7.3 Number of visits to the digital Accessibility Hub | 5000 | 3,176 | 3,176 |
| H7.4 Number of downloads for the Seven Sisters Country Park Accessibility Guide | Baseline to be established in 2023/24 | 2,247** | 2,247* |

* This figure currently represents bookings at SSCP only. Partner data for other locations is being collected where possible and will be collated for Q4.

** unique views of the page where the guide is accessed from. No. of actual downloads cannot be measured. The KPI wording will be updated for Q4 report.

2.13.2 As at the end of Q2, SSCP have had 66 bookings for the mobility scooters. These include both regulars and 'one off' users. Partner organisations have also had regular use of the mobility equipment.

2.13.3 In Q2, Surface improvements for the South Downs Way have been completed at Treyford (400m). Improved access for buggies, wheelchairs and cycles was completed on the 100m of bridge approaches to the South Downs Way & Downs Link River Adur crossing. At Truleigh Hill, work is underway to re-grade the surface (1000m) This will be due for completion next quarter.

2.13.4 In Q2, Phase 5 of Egrets way was completed delivering 1,050m of new accessible path and Phase 6 of Egrets Way is underway with an additional 3,000m of new path constructed so far.

2.14 **HLT#8: Digitally engage 100,000 people per year with the SDNP**

2.14.1 Q1/Q2 progress against HLT8 is monitored through key performance indicators outlined in Table 8.

Table 8 Progress against HLT8: Digitally engage 100,000 people per year with the SDNP

| KPI | KPI Target (yr4) | KPI contribution Q1/Q2 | Cumulative progress to date |
|---|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| H8.1 Total number of E-newsletter subscribers | 11,500 | 12,080 | 12,080 |
| H8.2 Total social media audience | 75,000 | 91,720 | 91,720 |

| | | | |
|--|--------|--------|--------|
| H8.3 Total visits to the hubs throughout the year: (Nature Recovery, Climate Change, Walking hub, Communities) | 20,000 | 14,650 | 14,650 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|

2.14.2 There are now 10,790 subscribers for main SDNP e-newsletter and 1,290 subscribers for the Planning e-newsletter.

2.14.3 SDNPA has a total social media audience of 91,720 followers. This total includes the SDNPA, SSCP and SDNPT social media channels.

2.14.4 Total visits to the hubs throughout the year does not include the Communities hub which has not yet launched.

3. Progress against Corporate Plan Priorities

Place Making

3.1 Quarterly progress has been monitored through the key performance indicators outlined in Table 9.

Table 9 Progress against Place Making - CPI & CP2

| Corporate Plan Priority | KPI | KPI Target (yrs. 4-5) | KPI contribution Q1/Q2 | Cumulative progress to date |
|--|--|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| CPI Administer the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and S106 | CPI.1 The total CIL and S106 distributed (in £) across the three HLTs | No target | £ 831,973 | £831,973 |
| CP2 Provide specialist advice in respect of Conservation, Design and Landscape across the organisation | CP2.1 Summary of service provided to be included in the Authority's Annual Monitoring Report | No target | Highlights from annual AMR report to be included in Q4 | |

3.2 Highlights of progress towards CP2 include:

- In Q1/Q2, CIL distributed £660,732; this has been spent on Nature Recovery and National Park for All projects. Some of the projects funded include work on Phase 2 of Centurion Way, Solar Panels on a Youth Centre (Sylvia Beaufoy in Petworth) and new outdoor play/education facilities at Meonstoke C of E Infant School.
- In Q1/Q2, S106 distributed £171,241. This has been spent on National Park for All community projects including the setup of a car club in Lewes.

Generating income

3.3 Quarterly progress has been monitored through the key performance indicators outlined in Table 10.

Table 10 Progress against Generating income - CP3 & CP4

| Corporate Plan Priority | KPI | KPI Target (yr4) | KPI contribution Q1/Q2 | Cumulative progress to date |
|---|--|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| CP3 Aim to raise £2.5 million self-generated income per annum through bids to Statutory sources | CP3.1 Total self-generated income raised (£) | £2.5m | £629,750 | £629,750 |

| | | | | |
|---|--|----------|----------|----------|
| and support for the South Downs National Park Trust in continuing to build a philanthropic income stream. | | | | |
| CP4 Incubate a number of income generating initiatives, building on Seven Sisters and the South Downs Trust | CP4.1 Total income (£) generated through the new Green Finance Off Set and Brokering service | £805,945 | £215,673 | £215,673 |
| | CP4.2 Number of new income generating pilots | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| | CP4.3 Total income (£) generated through core cost recovery on externally funded projects | £200K | £0 | £0 |

- 3.4 The SDNP Trust has secured £629,750 to date this financial year with over £4.6 million in warm opportunities being currently pursued. In Q1/Q2, the Trust has submitted a number of large bids including a SELEP application - circa £400k, Landscape Recovery Bid for the Arun Valley - circa £700k and Innovate UK bid - circa £2,000,000.
- 3.5 In Q1/Q2, the new Green Finance Off Set and Brokering service has Received Funds of £215,673.43 from signed S106 legal agreements securing land use change for nature restoration in pursuit of Hab Regs 2017 Nutrient Neutrality.
- 3.6 Strategic Partnerships: There is currently 1 signed Strategic Partnership in place with Iford Estate which is an ambitious 800ha multi habitat nature restoration scheme. In addition to this, there are a further 3 emerging strategic partnerships; Hinton Ampner (NT), Broadreed Estate and Warnford Park Estate.
- 3.7 Pipeline: There is currently a number of potential BNG schemes at various stages on the pipeline. Each of these will be secured through a legal agreement with funded obligations for the NPA to monitor and enforce (£35,000.00). These include: Wiston Estate, Pepperscombe Farm, Ecology Co-op (Cowdray Site), Chilgrove Farm and Wild Park. Building on this, over the past quarter, we have added Robert Bordman and Wareham Farm.
- 3.8 Three new income generating pilots include:
- WEP Set Service: Tender submitted to West Berkshire DC. Positive response but delayed until the next financial year due to insufficient funds.
 - Woodland Carbon Platform: Landowner offer established. 3 x landowners meetings scheduled to pitch for inclusion in Tranche 1. Roles & Responsibilities are being finalised between NPP, SDNPA and Palladium including the annual income and % of profit share.
 - New partnership established with Rural Solutions to provide a BNG setup service, to LPA's and responsible bodies, sharing the expertise we have developed through ReNature credits.
- 3.9 Income (£) generated through core cost recovery is progressing through a number of outstanding applications which include a significant proportion of full cost recovery.

Land Management

- 3.10 Quarterly progress has been monitored through the key performance indicators outlined in Table 11.

Table 11 Progress against Land management – CP5 & CP6

| Corporate Plan Priority | KPI | KPI Target (yrs4-5) | KPI contribution Q1/Q2 | Cumulative progress to date |
|---|---|--|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| CP5 Facilitate and support the endorsement, actions and key priorities through the process of Whole Estate Plans (WEPs) | CP5.1 No. of Estates with new endorsed WEPS | N/A | 0 | 8 |
| | CP5.2 No. of estates working towards an endorsed WEP | N/A | 0 | 6 |
| CP6 Deliver the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme in the National Park | CP6.1 Total funding (£) allocated across the Defra themes of People/ Place/ Nature/ Climate | £602,868 FiPL Year 3 programme budget | £567,852 | |

- 3.11 There are currently 6 Estates with WEPs at various points on the WEP Process. These are; Firlie Estate, Bereleigh Estate, Westerlands Estate, Glynde Estate (27th Feb 2024 Member site visit), Lancing College (21st May 2024 Member site visit) and Plumpton College (Member site visit TBC). Glynde Estate have successfully submitted their early draft WEP.
- 3.12 94% of the Year 3 programme budget (£602,868) has been spent to date. Recently approved FiPL grants for projects include:
- The provision and installation of a water ram-pump and water storage/tank to assist with water management for edible wildflower production and grazing livestock.
 - The conversion of a disused/dilapidated milking parlour building into the establishment of a farm shop, selling local produce from neighbouring farms/businesses and a café & a community space/hub (in addition to the expansion of the farm's animal feed business).
 - Installation of stock fencing to facilitate the effective conservation grazing of parcels of wet grassland, enabling sword heights to be established at the most beneficial height for breeding waders, specifically lapwings.

Economy

- 3.13 Quarterly progress has been monitored through the key performance indicators outlined in Table 12.

Table 12 Progress against Economy – CP7 & CP8

| Corporate Plan Priority | KPI | KPI Target (yrs4-5) | KPI contribution Q1/Q2 | Cumulative progress to date |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| CP7 Develop the 'Our South | CP7.1 No of businesses signed up | Baseline to be established in 2023/24 | 102 | 264 |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|--------|--|
| Downs' enterprise network | CP7.2 No. of Green South Downs certified businesses | Baseline to be established in 2023/24 | Due Q4 | |
| | CP7.3 No. of businesses signed up to South Downs Guardian | Baseline to be established in 2023/24 | Due Q4 | |
| | CP7.4 No. of businesses signed up to South Downs Protector | Baseline to be established in 2023/24 | Due Q4 | |
| | CP7.5 Total unrestricted income generated in £ | Baseline to be established in 2023/24 | Due Q4 | |
| CP8 Tourism in the South Downs National Park | CP8.1 No. of businesses signed up to Visitor Giving | Baseline to be established in 2023/24 | Due Q4 | |

- 3.14 South Downs Accommodation Providers are now listed on the SDNPA 'Where to Stay' web pages - supporting local sustainably minded rural businesses and adding a membership benefit to Our South Downs.
- 3.15 Green South Downs Award plaque has been designed and awarded in person to all 19 pilot businesses. This was supported by promotional activity on Instagram and the newsletter to celebrate their achievements.
- 3.16 Conversations with Climate Action Networks are underway to encourage adoption of Green South Downs as a sustainability certification for local enterprises.

Authority Process

- 3.17 Quarterly progress has been monitored through the key performance indicators outlined in Table 13.

Table 13 Progress against Authority Process – CP9

| Corporate Plan Priority | KPI | KPI Target (yrs. 4-5) | KPI contribution this Quarter | Cumulative progress to date |
|--|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CP9 Ensure that the organisation is more diverse and representative both in its staff and Members and considers Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in service delivery and policy development | CP9.1 Total % of EDI impact assessment forms complete | 100% | N/A | N/A |

3.18 This KPI will come into force when the new performance tracker platform is launched in Q3. This platform will require all new projects to attach a completed EDI form with their project approval submission.

4. Projects in delivery

4.1 As of Quarter 2 end, there are 44 projects that have a green RAG rating, and two projects that have an amber RAG rating:

- Edgelands: this project is 0% complete. The project, led by external artist, failed to secure the ACE project grant. Advice has been offered and resubmission is planned before the end of the year.
- Centurion Way: this project is 20% complete. Preliminary work on the clearance of trees and vegetation in the next section (Wellhanger & Littlewood) has been halted due to concerns relating to the potential impact on swarming bats and the wider effect on transit routes. A more robust ecological plan is required. A meeting with stakeholder is planned for November to resolve concerns.

5. Project Performance Reporting: Strategic Fund Implications

5.1 At the end of Q2, there is a balance of £223,269 unallocated in the Strategic Fund, this amount takes into account £68,456.5 that was allocated in Q1/Q2.

6. Annual Governance Statement

6.1 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2022/23 detailed 6 actions for 2023/24. These are monitored and reported on quarterly. See Appendix 2 for progress on the Annual Governance Statement actions for Q2.

7. Human Resources & Health and Safety

7.1 The Human Resources & Health and Safety paper for 2022/23 detailed 8 actions for 2023/24. These are monitored and reported on quarterly. See Appendix 3 for progress on the Human Resources and Health and Safety actions for Q2.

8. Other implications

| Implication | Yes*/No |
|---|---|
| Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority? | Projects may come forward for approval in future. No further decisions are required as a direct result of this report. |
| Does the proposal raise any Resource implications? | There are no direct resource implications to this report. |
| How does the proposal represent Value for Money? | Value for money for individual projects and pieces of work are assessed at the development stage, midway through a project and at the end, through an evaluative process that is reported to this Committee. Setting aside a fund to support projects represents a positive return on investment as it enables projects to go ahead which might not otherwise. |
| Which PMP Outcomes/ Corporate plan objectives does this deliver against | We have listed in the report and appendices which PMP outcomes and corporate plan objectives our corporate and project work link to |
| Links to other projects or partner organisations | Where appropriate these are set out in the report. |

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| How does this decision contribute to the Authority's climate change objectives | Please see the Climate Action section of this report which sets out high level targets around climate action. |
| Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal? | None |
| Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010? | Yes - Priority area three outlines the projects that have a specific focus on encouraging all people including those with protected characteristics to engage with and access the National Park. Completed EDI assessments are required at project approval stage for projects across all priority areas from Q3 2023/24. Any issues identified are highlighted within this report. |
| Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?? | None |
| Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal? | None |
| Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal? | None |
| Are there any Data Protection implications? | None |

9. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

9.1 Robust corporate planning and monitoring of performance are part of the mitigations for our corporate risk as detailed in the table below:

| Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigation |
|---|------------|----------|---|
| Unforeseen changes to the level of funding provided by relevant Government departments for future years | Likely | Moderate | 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. |
| There may be some risks to our reputation if we are unable to provide match funding for some of our larger projects. This would also potentially reduce the types of funding we were able to apply for. | Possible | Moderate | The main mitigation for this is to keep close scrutiny of the Strategic Fund and apply a rigorous prioritisation process when approving those projects that commit the SDNPA to significant funding over a number of years. Further mitigation for this risk is the work that will be carried out to generate income for the South Downs National Park and also potentially for the SDNPA. |

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| Appendices | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Q2 2023-24 Corporate Performance Summary2. Q2 2023-24 Annual Governance Statement update3. Q2 2023-24 Human Resources & Health and Safety update |
| SDNPA Consultees | Chief Executive; Director of Countryside Policy and Management; Director of Planning; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal Services, Interim Business Service Manager; Countryside and Policy Managers |
| External Consultees | None |
| Background Documents | Corporate Plan 2020-25 year 4-5 action plan |

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY – HIGH LEVEL TARGETS – Q1+Q2 PROGRESS

CLIMATE ACTION

HLT4 SDNPA to reduce its carbon footprint by 150 tonnes per annum in line with the 2030 net zero target

H4.1 Total annual SDNPA carbon emissions

KPI

TARGET

150 (t CO2)
reduction on 2022/23

PROGRESS

Reported Annually

HLT5 5% reduction per annum in the overall carbon footprint of the SDNP from the baseline reported in 2019

H5.1 Total tonnes CO2 reported year on year in annual LULUCF (forestry component) data

KPI

TARGET

1.5% reduction (t CO2)
annually from 2019 baseline

PROGRESS

Reported Annually

HLT3 To prepare for and implement Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

H3.1 The requirement is for relevant applications to achieve at least a 10% biodiversity net gain increase from the pre-development biodiversity value

KPI

TARGET

+10%
BNG from pre-dev value

PROGRESS

Reported Annually

HLT8 Digitally engage 100,000 people per year with the SDNP

H8.1 Total number of e-newsletter subscribers

KPI

TARGET

11,500 SUBSCRIBERS

PROGRESS

12,080

H8.2 Total social media audience

KPI

TARGET

75 K

H8.3 Total visits to the hubs throughout the year

KPI

TARGET

20 K VISITS

PROGRESS

91,720

14,650

HLT2 Work to maintain, enhance and/or restore 30% of existing Core Nature sites and support key species recovery within the SDNP by 2030

H2.1 Total Core Nature sites where SDNPA is contributing towards favourable condition

KPI

TARGET

3,541 HA
by 2025

H2.2 Number of species recovery programmes developed for delivery from 2023

TARGET

TBC

PROGRESS

Reported Annually

Reported Annually

HLT7 Work to make sure the landscape, scenery and tranquility of SDNP is available to everyone, no matter what their access needs are

H7.1 Number of sessions facilitated by mobility equipment

KPI

TARGET

100 SESSIONS

PROGRESS

66

H7.2 Metres of new and/or improved accessible path

KPI

TARGET

TBC

PROGRESS

4,550m

H7.3 Number of visits to the digital Accessibility Hub

KPI

TARGET

5 K VISITS
to the digital hub

PROGRESS

3,176

H7.4 Number of downloads for the Seven Sisters Country Park Accessibility Guide

TARGET

TBC

PROGRESS

2,247
unique views

HLT1 To secure an additional 13,000ha, or 33% of land managed for nature by 2030 from a baseline of 25%

H1.1 Total hectares of habitat created for nature

KPI

TARGET

13,000 HA
by 2030

H1.2 Total hectares habitat improved for nature

TARGET

857 HA

H1.3 Total hectares legally secured via the ReNature credits scheme

TARGET

2,000 HA
by 2025

PROGRESS

3071 HA

H1.4 Total hectares land put forward for future nature recovery

TARGET

Reported Annually

HLT6 Increase diversity of those engaging with the South Downs National Park

H6.1 % people from under-represented audiences engaged through volunteering

KPI

TARGET

TBC

H6.2 Number of engagement activities targeted at under-represented audiences

KPI

TARGET

30
engagement activities to be delivered annually

PROGRESS

Reported Annually

TBC

NATURE RECOVERY

A NATIONAL PARK FOR ALL

HOW WE WILL DELIVER OUR HIGH LEVEL TARGETS: CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES – Q1+Q2 PROGRESS

| PLACE MAKING | GENERATING INCOME | ECONOMY |
|---|---|---|
| <p>CP1.1 Total CIL and S106 (£) distributed</p> <p>Progress – £832K</p> | <p>CP3.1 Raise £2.5m total self-generated income in 2023/24</p> <p>Progress – £630K</p> | <p>CP7.1 No of business sign ups to 'Our South Downs' (OSD) network</p> <p>Progress – 264</p> |
| <p>CP2.1 AMR to include summary of service provided & case studies</p> <p>Reported Annually</p> | <p>CP4.1 Generate £805,945 from Green Finance</p> <p>Progress – £216K</p> | <p>CP7.2 No. of Green South Downs certified businesses</p> <p>Reported Annually</p> |
| <p>CP9.1 100% completed EDI impact assessment forms</p> <p>Reported Annually</p> | <p>CP4.2 One new income generating pilot</p> <p>Progress – 3</p> | <p>CP7.3 No. of businesses signed up to 'South Downs Guardian'</p> <p>Reported Annually</p> |
| <p>AUTHORITY PROCESS</p> | <p>CP4.3 £200k via full cost recovery on external projects</p> <p>Progress – 0</p> | <p>CP7.4 No. of businesses signed up to 'South Downs Protector'</p> <p>Reported Annually</p> |
| <p>LAND MANAGEMENT</p> | <p>CP5.1 4 estates with new endorsed WEPS</p> <p>Progress – 0</p> | <p>CP7.5 Total unrestricted income (£) generated via OSD</p> <p>Reported Annually</p> |
| | <p>CP6.1 Total FiPL funding (£) allocated to People/Place/ Nature/Climate</p> <p>Progress – £568K</p> | <p>CP8.1 No. of businesses signed up to Visitor Giving</p> <p>Reported Annually</p> |
| | <p>CP5.2 No. of estates working towards an endorsed WEP</p> <p>Progress – 6</p> | |

ITEM 12 APPENDIX 2: ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTIONS FOR 2023/24: Q2 UPDATE

| Action | Commentary | Next steps and/or potential risks |
|---|--|---|
| Review the Authority’s arrangements against the CIPFA Audit Committee Guidance | Initial discussions between Head of Governance and Monitoring Officers have taken place | Review to be undertaken during late 2023 on the how the Authority meets the CIPFA Audit Committee guidance |
| Implement suitable monitoring at Seven Sisters Country Park to inform the future development of any byelaw required | | Discussions to be held with colleagues at SSCP now that new Strategic and Commercial Manager is in post |
| Work with the Authority’s External Auditors to improve the timeliness of reports to the Policy and Resources Committee | External Auditors indicated they were unable to provide advanced notice on when audit programme work is to be delivered. A date has now been confirmed for the VFM Audit to begin. | Head of Governance and other colleagues continue to liaise with the External Auditor to ensure as much notice as possible of audit timescales |
| Ensure good governance mechanisms are in place to support the Authority’s growing work in the area of Green Finance | Discussions ongoing between Head of Governance, Monitoring Officer, Legal from WSCC, and other colleagues as appropriate to identify risk areas and address them as required | Remaining risk areas identified and work is underway to address them |
| Review of the Authority’s Fraud and Anti-corruption and Whistleblowing Policies | | Review to be undertaken |
| Develop an Authority policy on the use of non-corporate communication channels | Initial discussions had at Operational Management Team meeting on scope of the policy and draft underway | Draft to be reviewed by OMT in December 2023 |

ITEM 12 APPENDIX 3: HUMAN RESOURCES HEALTH & SAFETY: Q2 UPDATE

| Action | Commentary | Next steps and/or potential risks |
|---|---|---|
| Implementation of an EDI Learning Platform for staff and members | Inception meeting with Pearn Kandola to discuss roll out has taken place Training platform rolled out to SMT, OMT, Chair, Deputy Chair and Committee Chairs Platform launched to all staff at September all staff meeting | Continue to review usage and collate feedback from staff through workshops |
| Introduction of an applicant tracking system | Training / testing on the system has been carried out User guides and privacy statement finalised. | Testing and launch of system in Q4 |
| All staff survey and resulting action plan | Staff survey launched at the May all staff meeting and rolled out to staff end of May / early June 23 Consultant fed back results to all staff at September all staff meeting | Action plan working group with reps from all directorates to be agreed in Q3 Action plan to be finalised in Q4 |
| Introduce new safeguarding policy and procedures | Designated safeguarding officers trained Review of Safeguarding Policy | New policy to be agreed by H&S committee and OMT and communicated to staff Policy to be communicated to Members Safeguarding training for all relevant staff to be rolled out in Q4 |
| Review of establishment within PIER | Payroll Officer met with systems team at Brighton and Hove Establishment reviewed and updated | Completed earlier than expected |
| Implementation of actions from the H&S survey | Action plan compiled from the survey results by reps from the H&S committee Action plan agreed by H&S committee Working groups established to carry out actions | Review of H&S Policy to include wellbeing Review of lone working guidance |
| H&S audit of camping barn and foxhole cottages at Seven Sisters Country Park | Preliminary audit of cottages carried out to identify priorities on safety measures. The following have been implemented; de-fib location, transport risk assessment and review of furniture Fire safety risk assessment completed for cottages Insurance company visited SSCP site | Visit by emergency services to be arranged Audit of camping barn once major works have been completed |
| Introduction of an asset management system to aid health and safety auditing | Trial period taken place and data for South Downs Way as been loaded into system. | Review use of system for Legionnaires regulations |

