

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting	Executive Member for Policy and Resources Decision Day
Date and Time	Tuesday, 14th July, 2020 at 2.00 pm
Place	Virtual Teams Meeting - Microsoft Teams
Enquiries to	members.services@hants.gov.uk

John Coughlan CBE
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting will be broadcast on the County Council's website

AGENDA

DEPUTATIONS

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

KEY DECISIONS (NON-EXEMPT/NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

1. PARTNERSHIP FOR SOUTH HAMPSHIRE - REVISED AGREEMENT
(Pages 5 - 10)

To consider a report of the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment seeking approval to enter into a revised joint working agreement with Partnership for South Hampshire.

NON KEY DECISIONS (NON-EXEMPT/NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

**2. CONNECT2HAMPSHIRE - AN UPDATE ON HAMPSHIRE'S
TEMPORARY STAFFING AGENCY** (Pages 11 - 18)

To consider a report of the Director of Corporate Resources and Deputy Chief Executive giving an update on the significant progress achieved by Connect2Hampshire during the first 12 months of operation.

3. INVEST IN HAMPSHIRE BID (Pages 19 - 28)

To consider a report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services on a proposal for support from the Invest in Hampshire fund to secure the future of high amenity value public access land in the South Downs National Park (Corhampton Lane Farm, Hampshire).

Exclusion of the Press and Public

RECOMMENDATION:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the following items of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during these items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the reports.

KEY DECISIONS (EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL)

4. STRATEGIC LAND UPDATE (Pages 29 - 48)

To consider an exempt report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services giving an update on Strategic Land in Hampshire.

5. LEARNING DISABILITY HOUSING - PROGRAMME UPDATE (Pages 49 - 70)

To consider an exempt report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services and Director of Adult Health and Care giving an update on the Learning Disability Housing Programme.

NON KEY DECISIONS (EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL)

6. WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE DEBT (Pages 71 - 82)

To consider an exempt report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources seeking approval to the write-off of irrecoverable debt.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	14 July 2020
Title:	Partnership for South Hampshire Revised Agreement
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: Patrick Poyntz-Wright
Suzie Hanlon

Tel: 07719 990568 **Email:** patrick.poyntz-wright@hants.gov.uk
01962 832484 suzanne.hanlon@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to acknowledge the amended membership of the Partnership for South Hampshire Body (PfSH), and approve this change, together with other minor amendments to the joint working arrangements, and to recommend that the Executive Member for Policy and Resources gives authority to enter into a revised joint working agreement, reflecting these changes. The report also recognises the effectiveness, cost savings and environmental benefits of virtual meeting technology and commends its further adoption for sub-regional meetings of bodies such as PfSH.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member for Policy and Resources acknowledges and approves the changes to the membership of the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH), together with the revised terms of the joint working agreement, as set out in this report.
3. That authority is given to enter into contractual arrangements, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, to formalise the revised joint working arrangements.
4. That PfSH be advised that the County Council would support further use of virtual meetings for the Joint Committee and other PfSH meetings to reduce the travel and time involved in such gatherings, and support the PfSH ambition of a greener and cleaner future.

Executive Summary

5. This paper seeks to
 - set out the background to the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH)

- set out the reasons that a revised joint working agreement is required
- consider the finance for the new working arrangements

Contextual information

6. Hampshire County Council has been a member of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) since its creation in 2003. PUSH was established to enable joint working between the constituent authorities and in particular, to promote sustainable, economic-led growth and development of South Hampshire supported by enhanced transport and other infrastructure and to lobby and/or influence on all other associated aspects of life within the PUSH area. The County Council has played a significant role within PUSH and latterly PfSH in order to support the principles of sustainable economic development and ensure that the character and environment of southern Hampshire, particularly including the rural areas outside the main towns, are properly considered and protected.
7. A joint committee was established to enable PUSH to achieve its objectives (“the Joint Committee”) and Councillor Grajewski is the County Council’s current representative upon that committee.
8. At its meeting in June 2019, the Joint Committee considered a number of issues around the future arrangements of PUSH. The Joint Committee agreed that:
 - PUSH (now PfSH) should continue with its key objectives, being a clear focus on planning, housing delivery, infrastructure and the contribution to sustainable growth in South Hampshire;
 - the membership of PfSH should reflect the South Hampshire geography;
 - the two National Parks should be invited to join PfSH;
 - the word ‘Urban’ be removed from the Partnership’s title as this no longer reflected the make-up of the authorities within PUSH. It was agreed that the name should be changed to the ‘Partnership for South Hampshire’;
 - the business plan should be amended to reflect the MHCLG housing number methodology; the New Forest Mitigation work that is underway; and that Climate Change should be an additional focus for PfSH;
 - subscriptions should be levied annually to cover core administrative costs with Business Plan project work funded “according to organisation participation”;
 - 5 meetings of the Joint Committee will be scheduled per year;
 - the veto of Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council would be maintained; and
 - that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be consulted on its future arrangements with the view that it should decide the way that it wished to work.
9. The meeting also heard that the New Forest National Park Authority had decided to take up membership of PfSH whilst the South Downs National Park authority felt that with so little of its geography within the South Hampshire area it was not appropriate for them to join.
10. The revised Joint Working Agreement also needs to reflect that the Isle of Wight is no longer a member, having given notice in accordance with the requirements of the joint agreement.

11. The previous Joint Agreement was also a combined Joint Agreement with the Solent Growth Forum Joint Agreement. With the Isle of Wight leaving PfSH the Solent LEP has made alternative arrangements for scrutiny and so there is a need to separate out the two agreements.
12. The proposals detailed here have now been incorporated into a revised Joint Agreement. The revised Joint Agreement was prepared under the direction of the PfSH Monitoring Officer with input by Hampshire County Council officers, and the PfSH Joint Committee approved the draft Agreement at its meeting in December 2019.

Finance

13. Each constituent authority pays towards the core costs of PfSH. The percentage payment remains unchanged. These proportions are shown below:

Authority	%
Southampton City Council*	13.0%
Portsmouth City Council	19.5%
Hampshire County Council	28.2%
Eastleigh Borough Council	6.5%
Fareham Borough Council	6.5%
Gosport Borough Council	4.3%
Havant Borough Council	6.5%
Test Valley Borough Council	2.2%
Winchester City Council	1.1%
East Hampshire District Council	1.1%
New Forest District Council*	10.1%
New Forest National Park Authority	1.0%

14. In addition, authorities may be asked to pay for additional work required to advance or achieve the key objectives of PfSH. These will be on a buy-in basis as the PfSH Joint Committee may from time to time determine.
15. Southampton's proportion reflects that it provides financial and legal support for PfSH, and the New Forest District Council proportion has been increased to reflect that the whole of the Local Authority is now within PfSH.
16. The utilisation of virtual meeting technology during the current pandemic has provided solid evidence of the effectiveness of the technology and the benefits it brings in terms of time and travel savings. This is good for the environment and for work life balance particularly for meetings bringing people from a wide area together and requiring rush hour travel. It is therefore suggested that PfSH could make greater use of this technology to improve effectiveness and reduce the environmental impacts of travel.

Consultation and Equalities

17. Parties to PfSH were engaged via their appointed representative as to the proposed changes to the joint working arrangements. No further consultation is necessary.

Next Steps

18. The revised Joint Agreement is currently circulating amongst the constituent authorities for execution and each authority now needs to satisfy its own governance procedures to enable the Agreement to be entered into. The engrossed Agreement is currently with Gosport Borough Council, having already been executed by Winchester City Council, Portsmouth City Council, New Forest District Council and Test Valley Borough Council. It will be sent to Hampshire County Council for execution shortly.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The decision relates to a joint working agreement procedure and is not expected directly to have a significant impact on groups with protected characteristics. The proposed modifications should benefit all residents in the affected areas, and further activity will be subject to additional assessment as necessary.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date considered:	14 July 2020
Title:	Connect2Hampshire – an update on Hampshire’s Agency
Report from:	Director of Corporate Resources & Deputy Chief Executive

Contact name: Stephanie Randall, Head of Transformation & Digital, Corporate Resources

Tel: 0370 779 1776

Email: stephanie.randall@hants.gov.uk

Recommendations

1. The Executive Member is asked to note the significant progress achieved by Connect2Hampshire during the first 12 months of operation, including meeting the objective of providing greater transparency and control to the County Council in relation to its agency workforce.

Executive Summary

2. Connect2Hampshire is the trading name of Hampshire & Kent Commercial Services LLP, a Joint Venture between Hampshire County Council and Commercial Services Kent Ltd, for the delivery of agency worker supply to the County Council.
3. Following a decision by Cabinet in September 2018, the LLP was formally created, and after a subsequent period of implementation and migration to the new arrangements, Connect2Hampshire commenced the provision of agency services to the County Council on 1 April 2019. The agency has therefore now completed a full trading year of service provision.
4. This paper provides an update to the Executive Member on some of the achievements and challenges experienced during this first year, as well as the anticipated profit share for the County Council for the financial year ended 31st March 2020.
5. The report also reflects on the more recent challenges Connect2Hampshire have been managing and supporting the County Council with, including the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, alongside a significant cyber-attack experienced by the Commercial Services Group, which affected the various systems underpinning the operation of Connect2Hampshire.

Background

6. On 17 September 2018, Cabinet agreed a report from the Director of Corporate Resources, recommending the creation of a new Joint Venture Local Authority Trading Vehicle (LATV), for the purpose of providing agency services to all departments within the County Council. This decision was in recognition of the important role agency workers fulfil as part of the County Council's workforce requirement, and the County Council's desire to gain greater influence and control over the supply of these workers.
7. Working in partnership with Commercial Services Kent Ltd (CSKL), who had an existing and well-established agency service that they already provided to Kent County Council, Connect2Hampshire was created. This approach enabled the County Council to access CSKL's extensive and specialist knowledge in this area, as well as providing Connect2Hampshire access to CSKL systems, processes and back office support, helping the agency to keep operating costs lower. The LLP is owned 50:50 by the County Council and CSKL.
8. As part of the creation of the agency, it was necessary to incur various set up costs to establish the LLP, as well as operational pre-trading costs ahead of 1st April 2019 (for example, the salary costs of the new team recruited ahead of the operational launch of the agency). To cash-flow these early costs, sufficient funding was agreed to be set-aside by both partners, ahead of revenue beginning to be generated.

Recent Challenges

9. Whilst this report focuses on the outcomes achieved by Connect2Hampshire during the first year of trading, the agency has recently been impacted by some challenges which are important for the Executive Member to note for further context.
10. Connect2Hampshire has responded quickly to the recent challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, initiating their business continuity plans in line with the Government's lockdown directive. This has included enabling all operational staff to work from home, ensuring that they have been able to successfully continue to support the County Council through this particularly challenging period.
11. The agency has been further impacted by a serious cyber-attack on the systems owned by the Commercial Services Group, which underpin the delivery of the Connect2Hampshire service. This has resulted in a loss of systems since the beginning of April 2020.
12. Connect2Hampshire has quickly and successfully implemented further business continuity measures to ensure that their operations could continue to be provided effectively. Commercial Services Group have also taken swift and robust action in response to the attack, to ensure that their systems can be rebuilt and released safely.
13. One consequence of this however is that Connect2Hampshire currently is unable to extract performance information for 2019/20, whilst these systems are rebuilt and the data for the period since the incident is reconstructed. It is important to note though that during this time Connect2Hampshire has been able to continue to respond to enquiries, new requests for agency workers, as well as ensuring processes were quickly established to ensure both directly recruited agency workers and those sourced via agencies would be paid on time.

Achievements during the first 12 months

14. The first year has seen a strong start by Connect2Hampshire. Despite the expectation that as a new start-up Connect2Hampshire would experience a period of stabilisation as the new arrangements bedded in (both within the new team, but also within the County Council), in reality this was achieved fairly quickly, with a seamless transition away from the previous incumbent provider.
15. As with any new team, some operational challenges have been identified over the course of the year. However, as these have been identified the Connect2Hampshire team have responded promptly and taken steps to address these.

Improving Transparency

16. One of the most significant outcomes achieved following the introduction of Connect2Hampshire relates to the County Councils objective to secure a greater degree of control, oversight and influence over the sourcing and supply of its agency workforce. For the first time transparency exists in terms of understanding both the demand for agency workforce in to the County Council, and how this demand is being met, including any arrangements through other off-contract arrangements (i.e. not sourced through Connect2Hampshire or another existing contract).
17. Generally off-contract arrangements are more costly to the County Council than if sourced through Connect2Hampshire, but these also introduce a degree of risk as there is limited assurance that can be obtained with regard to the right to work, vetting and other pre-employment checks that are completed by the supplying agency. Within Connect2Hampshire no agency worker (whether directly supplied or sourced via a 3rd party supplier on their approved supply chain) can commence a work placement until all pre-employment checks and supporting documentation has been provided to them and validated.
18. Working collaboratively with Connect2Hampshire, significant progress has been made with the County Council to identify alternative options for the supply of workers where off-contract arrangements had previously been considered necessary. This has enabled a reduction in the use of these arrangements, and a financial saving to therefore be achieved by the hiring department. This focus on reducing off-contract arrangements will continue in to 2020/21.
19. The County Council also now has greater oversight of any 3rd party agencies who are supplying through Connect2Hampshire, including through the completion of supplier audits (for example vetting & checks and pay audits). Where concerns are identified (for example with regard to appropriateness of a supplier's business processes or practice), the County Council has been involved closely in any decision taken about the ongoing suitability of a supplier.

The benefits of Connect2Hampshire being a managed service provider

20. As a managed service provider, Connect2Hampshire both directly recruits their own agency workforce to supply only to the County Council, as well as sourcing candidates through their contracted 3rd party suppliers. This arrangement provides flexibility to the County Council, through being able to source from multiple suppliers to meet changes in demand.

21. However, one of the key objectives of creating Connect2Hampshire was to enable the County Council to grow its own dedicated agency workforce, thereby contributing toward improvements in the overall continuity and quality of the service we provide, as well as offering a flexible alternative option to a wider workforce pool (for example where agency work better suited someone's personal circumstances). It also provides a potential pipeline into permanent employment with the County Council at a lower cost.
22. Directly resourcing agency workers also removes the fees paid to other 3rd parties, contributing instead to the resulting net profit of Connect2Hampshire, and therefore the profit share ultimately returned to the County Council. Understanding the extent to which Connect2Hampshire has been able to grow the number of agency workers who are directly supplied is therefore a key measure of success.
23. As at the end of the year, in the region of 70% of all admin agency roles were resourced and supplied directly by Connect2Hampshire, in the region of 60% of IT & Professionals agency roles, and 100% of Catering, Warehouse & Facilities Management agency roles. This is a significant achievement for the first year.
24. More moderate progress has been made with regard to direct resourcing of non-qualified care, nursing and qualified social worker's (less than 20% of these agency roles were directly supplied as at the end of the year, with a larger proportion of demand being met through Connect2Hampshire's 3rd party supply chain). However, there has been success increasing this position during the early months of 2020/21, and this will continue to be a key focus for the team.

Operational performance

25. The operational performance of Connect2Hampshire is governed through the LLP's Executive Board. This Executive Board includes two Directors: the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources for the County Council and the Chief Executive of Commercial Services Kent Ltd, as well as a Senior Board Officer from each organisation, and Connect2Hampshire's Business Manager.
26. Additionally, the day-to-day performance and delivery of services to the County Council is reported through quarterly service review meetings held between senior representatives of the County Council and Connect2Hampshire. These meetings consider performance measures such as the rate of fulfilment against demand for agency workers (i.e. has Connect2Hampshire been successful in sourcing appropriate candidates), and the quality of the services received. Quality focuses on two aspects; the quality of service provided by the Connect2Hampshire team, and the overall quality and suitability candidates once they have been placed (for example, understanding if placements have ended early for reasons relating to inadequate experience or unacceptable behaviour of a worker).
27. Information available during the year indicated that good progress was being made by the service, with expected performance levels for the first year being met. However, monitoring of performance through these regular serviced reviews, together with building close working relationships between key members of the Connect2Hampshire team and the County Council has helped to identify and escalate any emerging issues (arising on both sides) quickly, enabling these to be understood and promptly addressed as appropriate.

28. Through this approach the key areas of strategic focus for Connect2Hampshire in terms of developing necessary resourcing and marketing plans are also agreed with the County Council, aligned to our workforce priorities.

Finance

29. The estimated revenue spend on agency services by the County Council through Connect2Hampshire during 2019/20 was expected to be in the region of £32m. This was informed based on previous years agency expenditure incurred and allowed for an increase in cost of living pay inflation.
30. The final revenue spend through Connect2Hampshire for 2019/20 was lower than this at approximately £27m, representing a reduction in expenditure across the County Council Departments. It is important to note however this excludes any off-contract spend, as referenced earlier in the report, as well agency expenditure incurred through a very small number of specialist contracts the County Council already had in place with other providers, and which run alongside the agreement with Connect2Hampshire.
31. In terms of the final financial position for Connect2Hampshire, during the first 12 months of trading an overall net profit was generated of approximately £224,000 (excluding pre-trading set-up revenue costs), representing a profit share for Hampshire County Council of £112,000. This position has enabled the LLP to fully offset the pre-trading revenue set-up costs incurred.
32. In line with all organisations, the future trading position for 2020/21 will be uncertain in the context of Covid-19; the LLPs operating model is wholly reliant on the requirements of HCC. The LLPs Executive Board are therefore taking a prudent position with regard to the expected revenue generation for 2020/21 and will closely monitor the impact of the current situation throughout the coming year.

Future direction and opportunities

33. As previously noted to the Executive Member, the creation of Connect2Hampshire is a new direction for the County Council in this crucial area and is intended to address challenges previously experienced. The immediate priority for the new joint venture arrangement has been ensure the continuity of agency worker provision to the County Council's core business. However, the arrangement also provides a vehicle for the County Council to support other potential temporary workforce opportunities in the future.
34. The Executive Board are responsible for setting out the future business plan for the LLP, and this will be reviewed in September 2020. This will be very mindful to ensure that all planning takes full account of supporting the County Council first, particularly in light of Covid-19.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Strategic Plan**

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Creation of a Joint Venture Local Authority Trading Company Supply of Agency Workers to Hampshire County Council	<u>Date</u> 17 September 2018 8 March 2019
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u> None	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**1. Equality Duty**

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

There are no changes proposed in this report. As such a further equalities impact assessment has not been undertaken.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. There is no expected impact on Crime and Disorder.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No impact considered.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No impact considered.

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	14 July 2020
Title:	Invest in Hampshire Bid
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

Contact name: Felicity Roe

Tel: 0370 779 5233

Email: felicity.roe@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. To present a proposal for consideration by the Executive Member for support from the Invest in Hampshire fund to secure the future of high amenity value public access land in the South Downs National Park (and more particularly at Corhampton Lane Farm, Corhampton, Hampshire).

Recommendation

2. That the Executive Member approves a grant from the Invest in Hampshire Fund to the South Downs National Park Authority for £13,810 as detailed within the body of this report and at Appendix 2.

Executive Summary

3. This report considers a request for funding under the Invest in Hampshire Fund. The South Downs National Park Permissive Access Project has been set up by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). The Invest in Hampshire award to the SDNPA would enhance project outcomes in Hampshire.
4. The funding would ensure that the full extent of public access currently enjoyed at Corhampton Lane Farm, Hampshire (9,800 metres of permissive bridleways known as 'Corhampton Gallops') remains available and safeguarded for public use for a period of 4 years, after which funding under the Environmental Land Management Scheme is anticipated to become available.

Contextual information

5. Farmers and land managers have been encouraged, through agri-environment scheme funding, to provide permissive access to their land since the late 1980s. Agreements were for 10-year periods and were typically renewed upon expiry until access funding was discontinued after 2010. This has led to extensive loss of public access as agreements have reached expiry in the intervening years.
6. The County Council was not consulted by Natural England (NE) when arranging permissive access with farmers and land managers, but it is apparent that some of the access created under agri-environment schemes is of high value and worthy of retention for Hampshire residents, providing them with access to otherwise inaccessible areas, connections between existing routes and general enhancement of the rights of way network. It is widely expected that support of permissive access will again become available when the Environmental Land Management Scheme is launched in 2024.
7. The SDNPA has captured a record of available NE permissive access within its boundaries and an independent review has been carried out by the South Downs Local Access Forum to ascertain which access routes are of highest value. Forum members have rated access by its connectivity, evidence of use, scenic/heritage value, ease of use and maintenance requirements.
8. A decision has been taken by the SDNPA to pay farmers and land managers hosting the routes determined to be of highest value (9 no. in Hampshire) on a temporary basis to ensure that these stay open until 2024 (when ELMS funding is anticipated to be available). Selected 'top tier' farmers/land managers are being invited to enter into an agreement with the SDNPA for up to 4 years.
9. The SDNPA is prepared to fund at the Natural England rate, less the £350 base payment, and subject to a minimum payment of £500 and a maximum of £5,000. Out of the 19 top tier farmers/land managers selected across the National Park area, only one receives funding that exceeds the SDNPA's £5,000 cap. That funding relates to Corhampton Gallops in Hampshire which is funded by Natural England at £8,820.
10. The Corhampton Gallops are maintained to a good standard and are very heavily used. Typical users include horse riders, walkers and mountain bikers, with weekdays attracting 50+ users and Sundays attracting 100+ users. During the Covid-19 lockdown period use has reportedly tripled. Horseboxes and cars regularly park up to use the routes, and many users visit daily. The public amenity value of the Corhampton Gallops is accordingly extremely high.

11. It has been confirmed that the shortfall in funding over the SDNPA's maximum payment cap would need to be addressed in full if the current extent of the Corhampton Gallops is to be kept open for the benefit of Hampshire residents. A very high number of representations have been received by the County Council from residents requesting its financial assistance to keep the entirety of the Corhampton Gallops available for public use.
12. The SDNPA has confirmed that a financial contribution from the Invest in Hampshire Fund would enhance the outcomes of its Permissive Access Project. Funding of the shortfall as if there had been no cap would help safeguard the future of the Corhampton Gallops, and the Authority welcomes the opportunity to partner with Hampshire County Council in pursuit of this result.

Finance

13. The proposed award to the South Downs National Park Authority is to be split across 4 financial years and would be payable upon evidence of a signed and approved access agreement for permissive access at Corhampton Gallops.
14. An award would be made on the understanding that there can be no further financial support from the County Council after the 4-year period.

Legal Implications

15. Subject to certain restrictions, the County Council has the power under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals generally may do including the power to give grants.

Grants Criteria

16. A copy of the criteria used for considering grants from the Invest in Hampshire fund is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

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EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

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- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
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Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

No negative impact has been identified.

FUNDING CRITERIA FOR INVESTING IN HAMPSHIRE

The following criteria should be taken into account when considering a request for funding.

1. Assistance will be considered only in response to direct applications from properly constituted organisations seeking assistance for one-off funding only. The application must show that the organisation is properly and legally organised and has its own bank account. Funding would only be awarded if the proposal was to support activity within agreed County Council priorities.
2. Applications will be considered for the items listed below, where these are within agreed priorities and generally only where other substantial funding exists:
 - Specific capital projects for the improvement or maintenance of significant assets or facilities within Hampshire
 - Projects that will support economic development and business growth within Hampshire.
3. Other applications will be considered at the absolute discretion of the Leader where he considers that the award will make a contribution for the wider benefit of Hampshire and its residents.
4. The wider economic and other benefits to the residents of Hampshire should be considered together with any complementary benefits for Hampshire County Council.
5. Awards will not usually be made in respect of applications from the following:-
 - Government Institutions
 - Schools
 - Overseas and out of County organisations which have no direct Hampshire involvement
 - Bodies requesting funds for onward distribution to other charities e.g. mayoral appeals, carnivals, fetes, or for their own fundraising events.
6. Apart from exceptional circumstances, the requesting body would be expected to provide their own funding towards the project.
7. As a general rule, grants in excess of £250,000 will not be awarded unless significant benefits and funding are available. In exceptional cases, where the benefits are significant and directly relate to services and functions close to the County Council's key objectives, then an award greater than the level above would be considered.

- 8.** Given the longer term nature of capital projects, requests can be considered well in advance, but funding will only be released once evidence of capital expenditure has been provided to the County Council or other arrangements made, consistent with the agreement of the Director of Corporate Resources.

South Downs National Park Permissive Access Project

Applicant	South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA)		
Name / Location of Project	South Downs National Park Permissive Access Project		
Summary of Project / Bid	<p>Permissive Access complements the Rights of Way network by providing access to otherwise inaccessible areas and by connecting existing routes to each other. Since the late 1980s the Government has encouraged farmers and rural land managers to provide permissive access to their land through the making of payments under agri-environment schemes (agreements renewed on a 10-yearly basis). This funding has now been discontinued, which has led to extensive loss of public access as existing 10-year agreements have expired. It is anticipated that the funding of permissive access will again become available within the future Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS), which is due to be rolled out in 2024.</p> <p>An independent review has recently been undertaken of access under expiring agreements within the National Park, using various criteria including connectivity, ease of use, maintenance, scenic value and evidence of use. The project aims to fill the funding gap to the start of ELMS for the highest value access routes currently available, to enable these to remain open. Selected top tier farmers and land managers are to be invited to enter a similar access agreement with the SDNPA. The expectation is that the agreements would be renewed annually until ELMS funding becomes available or for up to 4 years, whichever is sooner.</p> <p>The project should ensure that the most valuable permissive paths identified (9 of the top tier are in Hampshire) are kept open for use by the public.</p> <p>It has been determined that a funding contribution from the County Council would enhance the Project by safeguarding the full extent of the high value permissive access routes collectively known as 'Corhampton Gallops' (9,800 metres of permissive bridleways in Corhampton, Hampshire) for public use.</p>		
Funding Requested	£13,810 total contribution, split over 4 years:		

	£2,350 £3,820 £3,820 £3,820	2020/21 2021/22 2022/23 2023/24	
Funding Arrangements (including matched funding)	<p>The SDNPA has secured funding of £92,300 (split over 4 years with availability subject to annual review) to pay selected farmers and land managers the same agri-environment scheme rate (per metre of permissive access), but not the £350 base payment and subject to a minimum annual payment of £500 and a maximum payment of £5,000.</p> <p>The County Council's contribution will pay for the shortfall in funding for the one Hampshire-based route identified within the project that exceeds the SDNPA's maximum payment cap of £5,000 (Corhampton Gallops – total funding of £8,820 per annum required).</p>		
What are the benefits for Hampshire Residents?	<p>The project will enable the continued provision of valuable public access routes within and connecting to the South Downs National Park. Said access is of high value to Hampshire residents, providing them with access to otherwise inaccessible areas.</p> <p>The preservation of continuous payments reduces the likelihood of participants opting out of permitting public access across land before the introduction of ELMS.</p> <p>The Corhampton Gallops are enjoyed by a wide range of Hampshire residents and intensively used. This is supported by the very high number of representations that have been received by the County Council from residents.</p> <p>The provision of high quality access to land connects people in Hampshire with the county's rich and diverse environment and landscapes.</p>		
What are the complementary benefits for HCC?	High quality access to the countryside encourages outdoor access which supports healthier lifestyles and increased engagement with rural life.		
Any other relevant factors?			

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