

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Committee	Executive for Policy and Resources
Date:	19 January 2021
Title:	HCC involvement in the ELM Convenor Partnership Test and Trial
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Executive Member Countryside and Rural Affairs to be the Hampshire County Council representative on the Environmental Land Management (ELM) Convenor Partnership Test and Trial.

Recommendation

2. To approve the Executive Member Countryside and Rural Affairs as Hampshire County Council's representative on the Advisory Board for the ELM Convenor Partnership for Hampshire.

Executive Summary

3. The ELM Convenor Partnership for Hampshire is a test and trial project funded by Defra to support Environmental Land Management in England.
4. The Environmental Land Management (ELM) Scheme is at the cornerstone of the Governments new agricultural policy, which is founded on the principle of public money for public goods.
5. Defra started a number of test and trials in 2018 to assist in determining how Environmental Land Management will be delivered across a range of regions and sectors. To date 67 test and trials have been developed involving a wide range of stakeholders across the sector.

Contextual information

6. A 7 year transition period will commence in 2021 as we work towards a system where farmers and land managers are paid based on their contribution to delivering the ambitions of the 25 year Environment Plan such as clean and plentiful water, thriving plants and wildlife, beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment, reduction of and adaptation to climate change.
7. This journey will mean phasing out existing payment schemes and introducing a new approach that will include the Environmental Land Management scheme; a new way for farms and landowners to receive funding for producing public goods, such as nature friendly farming.
8. ELM is being developed in partnership with farmers, land managers and the wider industry including public and third sector through a series of test and trials. The aim is to design a scheme that works for its users and achieves Government goals for the environment, biodiversity and climate change ready for roll out in 2024.
9. The Hampshire ELM Convenor partnership aims to explore the governance for land and resource management with the following objectives:
 - a. Co-ordinate all desired outcomes for the management of land and map them at a scale that is suitable for the farming industry,
 - b. Provide a framework for collaborating across all sectors to deliver the Environment Plan,
 - c. Improve the accountability of the benefits that public investment is delivering locally.
10. Defra has confirmed that the ELM scheme will have a local component and the ELM Convenor Partnership proposes to work at a geographic county scale. It intends to focus on two natural character areas in Hampshire that are outside of the protected landscapes (the two National Parks and three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty).
11. An Advisory Board will be convened to test a new governance system for ELM and includes representatives from the Country Land and Business Association, the National Farmers Union, Southern Water, the National Trust, the Wildlife Trust and the Council for the Protection of Rural England alongside Hampshire County Council.

12. Work by the Advisory Board is due to start in November 2020 and complete its task in October 2021. The project is split into three phases:
- a. Engagement with interested parties and formation of the Advisory Board.
 - b. Development of Land Management Frameworks; for the spatial prioritisation of ELM in two contrasting areas of Hampshire.
 - c. Development of a local delivery (Collaboration) Strategy for the two Land Management Frameworks.

13. With the Agricultural Bill receiving Royal Assent on 11 November the transition to 2024 will start in January 2021. This ELM Convenor Test and Trial provides an opportunity for Hampshire County Council to be involved and guide the future delivery of farming in Hampshire, ensuring that it meets the test of public money for public goods.

Finance

14. There are no financial implications for providing representation on the ELM Convenor Test and Trial Advisory Board.

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:	no
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.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
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 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:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

*Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:*

- (a) *why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- (b) *will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*