

# COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT TO SHEET PARISH COUNCIL

11 DECEMBER 2018

## 1. New South Downs Volunteer Conservation Fund

A new fund has been set up by the South Downs National Park Trust which provides funding as well as volunteer support for conservation projects. There are now three ways to apply for funding from the South Downs National Park and I thought it would be helpful to summarise them all and include the relevant links:

### **South Downs Volunteer Conservation Fund**

Grants of up to £5,000 are available for non-profit organisations, parish councils and landowners in 2019 for projects that care for and enhance the South Downs National Park and promote opportunities for people to understand and enjoy it.

Almost any project which helps to conserve or enhance the National Park is eligible, provided it fits with the National Park Partnership Management Plan and makes use of the South Downs Volunteer Ranger Service. Project examples include refurbishing a community pond, creating a sensory garden, creating wildflower meadows and butterfly banks.

The deadline to apply for the first round of funding is 31 March 2019 and the first grants will be awarded in June 2019. Find out more at [www.southdownstrust.org.uk/volunteer-fund](http://www.southdownstrust.org.uk/volunteer-fund)

### **South Downs Sustainable Communities Fund**

Any partnership or other not-for-profit organisations which include social enterprise, community interest companies, voluntary organisations and ‘for profit’ organisations (these projects cannot be for financial gain to the business) can apply for funding if they believe their project is bringing social,

environmental, economic or cultural benefits to a community within the National Park.

Grants are available for up to 50% of the project cost from £250 to a maximum of £10,000. Please note that the criteria of the fund are regularly reviewed and may change without notice. The National Park Authority is not obliged to consider applications under criteria which were in place when an enquiry or expression of interest was made.

### **Infrastructure Delivery Plan Projects**

The SDNPA has now opened the call for projects for the next round of CIL spending. The closing date for bids is 15th February 2019.

“Infrastructure” consists of the services and systems that our communities need to function including the natural environment, roads, schools, community services, sports and leisure facilities and green spaces.

The CIL Infrastructure Delivery Plan lists all infrastructure needed to support sustainable growth in the National Park, as set out in our emerging Local Plan. Projects identified on the IDP will be considered for funding through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Projects may include the provision of new infrastructure, or the improvement, replacement, operation and maintenance of existing infrastructure.

The IDP is a ‘live document’ that will be updated over time as infrastructure needs change and more information becomes available.

Applications to both the Sustainable Communities Fund and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan can be submitted via ‘Projects for the South Downs’, the online application process, which can be accessed using this link – [www.projects.southdowns.gov.uk](http://www.projects.southdowns.gov.uk) .

Any queries relating to the use of the Projects for the South Downs system should be directed to [grants@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:grants@southdowns.gov.uk).

## 2. Brief news from Hampshire County Council

Parish Councillors may be interested to note the following:

- The Local Government Finance Settlement was delayed last week due to lack of Parliamentary time, which resulted from all the Brexit debates and statements. The Finance Settlement is now expected next week and we will be looking closely to see what happens with Council Tax, the Social Care Levy and core Government Funding.
- As part of our resilience planning, the Cabinet at HCC have received a report on Brexit issues which sets out the potential impact for Hampshire of a no-deal Brexit. Contingency reparations are being made for disruption at the Port of Portsmouth and the Highways network, as well as the impact on the local economy.
- On 2 December three London Boroughs were “on-boarded” to Hampshire’s Shared Services Partnership: Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster. Functions such as payroll, IT, HR and Finance will now be provided to these London Boroughs by Hampshire County Council staff. This makes Hampshire the largest shared services partnership in the country. The shared services team is a great success because it brings an income stream to HCC as well as extra resilience for Hampshire taxpayers.