

# Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (SNOWS)

## Project review – May 2024

### \*For Chichester DC and Horsham DC Regulation 19 Local Plan submissions\*

#### **Purpose**

This brief report has been produced by the Water Neutrality Project Manager to update stakeholders on:

1. Current project progress, including deliverables produced to date
2. Review of outstanding project scope to be delivered, including high-level schedule

#### **Current progress**

##### *Outline Business Case - complete*

The **Outline Business Case** was endorsed by the Chief Executives at the Executive Board meeting in April 2023.

##### *Comms & Engagement Plan – complete*

The **Comms & Engagement Plan** was published internally in April 2023.

##### *Comms & Engagement deliverables – ongoing*

Several deliverables were published with or after the C&E Plan – the **Comms & Engagement Log**, the **External Stakeholder Contact List**, the **RACI Matrix**, the **SNOWS Standard Presentation**, the **SNOWS Project Brief**, the **SNOWS External FAQs** and **SNOWS Internal FAQs**, the **SNOWS project newsletter** (published every 2-3 months), a **‘Water efficiency and neutrality in Sussex North’ public messaging note**, and various other water neutrality communications via the local authority websites.

##### *Risk, issues & opportunity (RIO) management – complete*

The **Risk, Issue & Opportunity (RIO) Strategy** was finalised and published internally in July 2023. The **Risk, Issue & Opportunity (RIO) Register** was published internally in September, following wide consultation amongst the sponsoring local authorities, plus external project stakeholders, including the Environment Agency, Natural England and Southern Water. RIOs are discussed at relevant governance group meetings, plus a monthly meeting with West Sussex CC to discuss the risks assigned to them.

##### *Project scope – complete*

The final **SNOWS Project Scope** was published internally in June 2023. The forecast delivery dates, and resources / consultations were updated following the publication of the detailed project schedule in January 2024. Further changes to the scope now go through the project’s formal change control procedures.

#### *Change control – complete*

The project's **Change Control Procedures** and associated **Change Evaluation & Decision Log** were published in September 2023.

#### *Delivery schedule – complete*

The final, detailed **Project Schedule** was implemented in January 2024. The current scheduled launch date for SNOWS is November 2024.

#### *Procurement – ongoing*

The final draft of the **Procurement Plan** is being reviewed internally. Once the plan is finalised, it will be signed-off by local authority executives. Once the plan is approved, and properties and funding are secured, procurement of necessary services can take place. Funding has been secured for some procurement activities to commence, which we intend to begin shortly.

#### *Monitoring & Reporting – ongoing*

The first draft of the **Monitoring & Reporting Plan** has almost finished its first review by the local authorities. This is an important document that will need to be widely consulted internally and externally – principally to Natural England and Southern Water. Most of the other M&R deliverables are regular reports, so these will be produced later in the project life cycle, though additional monitoring deliverables have been identified in the first draft plan.

#### *Costs & Funding – ongoing*

The Project Manager has produced a skeleton draft of the **Costs & Funding Plan**, a critical document that will set out the forecasts for offsetting delivery, how much water 'credits' will cost applicants, and how the scheme will fund the installation of offsetting measures and scheme running costs. As part of the development of the plan, the Project Manager has produced an initial draft of a **SNOWS Costs Calculations** document, setting out scheme operating costs, offsetting costs, and developer credit costs. The scheme's capacities and costs cannot be finalised until Southern Water release their Water Resource Management Plan data to us in summer 2024.

#### *Delivery Plan – ongoing*

The **Delivery Plan** is the key document for the project – setting out the processes and deliverables for the scheme's operation. So far, the only internally published documents are the **SNOWS Applications Register** and **SNOWS Offset Properties Register**, which were finalised in March 2024. We are now centrally tracking water neutrality applications and any properties used for offsetting purposes using these registers. A **SNOWS Financial Register** is still being developed. The **SNOWS Application Access Prioritisation** approach (i.e. how scheme access will be managed for applications) is currently being considered by the local authority executives, though further detailed refinement will be required before publication. The draft **SNOWS Processes** (scheme operational processes, e.g. for applications) are currently being reviewed internally. There will be additional deliverables to produce once the above are finalised.

*Knowledge & Information Management – ongoing*

So far, the **SNOWS File Plan** and **Document & Deliverable Register** have been internally published, both in July 2023. There are still further deliverables to produce, including the **Knowledge & Information Management Plan**.

*Engaging and securing offset properties – ongoing*

We are actively engaging with several household and non-household property owners across the affected area for offsetting opportunities that SNOWS can use to provide offsetting capacity for the scheme.

*Recruitment – ongoing*

As we were successful with a £250,000 bid to the Planning Skills Delivery Fund, which we received in March 2024, we are in the early stages of finalising a role profile and recruiting for an additional full-time SNOWS resource, principally to lead on securing and managing offsetting properties and suppliers.

## **Outstanding scope to be delivered**

### *Benefits realisation*

- Benefits Realisation Plan – scheduled for **October** production
- Benefits review report – scheduled to produce template **shortly prior to scheme launch**

### *Business Case*

- Full Business Case – scheduled for **spring / early summer** production

### *Comms & engagement*

- Developer webinar (x2) – scheduled to take place **shortly prior to scheme launch**

### *Costs & funding*

- Costs & Funding Plan – scheduled for **summer and early autumn** production

### *Delivery*

- Delivery Plan – scheduled for **summer** production
- SNOWS Access Prioritisation – scheduled for **July** publication
- SNOWS Processes – scheduled for **July** publication
- Financial Registers – scheduled for **autumn** production
- Internal reporting dashboard – scheduled for **summer** production
- User guides (DM teams; applicants) – scheduled for **early summer** production
- DM team training webinars – scheduled to take place **shortly prior to scheme launch**
- Standard documents – scheduled for **summer** production

### *Knowledge & information management*

- Knowledge & Information Management Plan – scheduled for **September** production

### *Monitoring, reporting & quality management*

- Monitoring & Reporting Plan – scheduled for **late summer** publication
- WNLOG update report – scheduled to produce template in **late summer**
- Scheme update reports (incl. & excl. finances) – scheduled to produce template in **late summer**
- Audit reports (data & financial; offset provision) – aim to produce template in **early autumn**

### *Procurement*

- Procurement Plan – scheduled for **June** endorsement and publication.
- Procurement of support services – scheduled for **early summer** completion
- Procurement of offsetting suppliers – scheduled for **early autumn** completion

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**3 May 2024**