

Meeting notes

Meeting Title:	Local Nature Partnership Board Meeting
Date:	10 March 2022
Time:	09:30 – 12:00
Location:	via Microsoft Teams
Present:	Robin Teverson (RT) Chair, Carolyn Cadman (CC) Deputy Chair, Wesley Smyth (WS), Oliver Baines (OB), Karen Burrows (KB), Cllr Martyn Alvey, Stephen Marks (SM), Tanya Saker (TS) for Paul Masters (PMas), Julian Branscombe (JB), Martin Howlett (MH), Peter Marsh CEO (PMar), Nick Bruce-White (NB-W), Cllr Steve Watt (Cllr SW), Sian Rees (SR), Ilya Maclean (IM)
In attendance:	Philippa Hoskin (PH)
Guests:	Robert Lacey (RL)

1	Apologies, items of AOB, Minutes, Matters Arising & Actions and Chair's report
1.1	Apologies, items for AOB <i>Apologies:</i> Cherilyn Mackrory MP (CM), Sophie Hosking (SH) <i>AOB:</i> None
1.2	Minutes of previous Board Meeting Minutes approved.
1.3	Matters Arising and Actions <i>Matters arising</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KB – the planned Green Skills questionnaire didn't go ahead as the as LEP are carrying out a deep dive across Cornwall, KB has instead input our thoughts to this. • RT has made a plea to government to think about green skills regarding ecology not just clean energy. • City of Culture – there hasn't been another meeting recently. With regards to the artist in residence, SF can have a chat with GC-G. • LNP letter of support – LG has sent out a letter of support to the board, on behalf of IM (University of Exeter), on treescapes. There have been no objections so far. 14 March is deadline.
1.4	Chair's report (full report circulated with the board papers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganisation at the Council – great news that the support for the partnership continues. Congratulations to SF who is moving to Dorset Council; SF said it had been an honour and a privilege to work with the partnership. RT thanked SF for everything he has done. Recommendation: to note – NOTED

2	<p>Executive Report (full report circulated with the board papers)</p> <p>PM expanded on the significant changes to the senior leadership team at the Council. From 1 April PM will take up a new role which will include a portfolio of assets, commercial and capital programme. He will have a shareholder function for the Council's group of companies. From an environmental and carbon perspective PM hopes that he can continue to strengthen the joint agenda in his new role. The new Connectivity and Environment Service will be headed up by Vicky Fraser; RT and PM have met up with VF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr MA added there would be little change for LNP apart from new Service and Strategic Director. Not expecting change to the portfolio; officer changes are still ongoing. Optimistic that PM and SF's replacements will be committed in their support to the LNPs work. • RT thanked PM for all his contributions as the first CEO of the LNP. He's helped to promote agenda and delighted with PM's intent to continue to help when in his new role, especially around the carbon agenda. VF is keen to carry on high level of work. <p>Recommendation: to note – NOTED</p>
3	<p>LNP Sub Committee Update (paper circulated ahead of the meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornwall Catchment group met yesterday. The EA is funding Championing Coastal Coordination – looking at interconnected landscapes and seascapes and a research report is coming together for the end of March. • Natural Flood Management plan – CC leading. Overlap between activities good for natural flood management, good for biodiversity, and good for climate change. • LNP Evidence Group has updated KPIs for EGS and using Aichi biodiversity targets has re-assessed how Cornwall is progressing against the targets. • Marine Liaison Group – hosting Blue carbon projects across organisations and with academics, understanding different projects and sharing expertise. Awaiting Defra HPMA's announcement re locations; can expect one in South West. <p>Board Member comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IM - regarding KPI reports there is mixed news in terms of indicators. IM plans to circulate the full report to the Evidence Group after which a summary report will be distributed to the LNP. Update at future LNP. • Trees – the treescape project will look at land management and potentially an advisory service. Further conversation was had re trees. Carbon trading is moving up the national agenda. Concern for trees being planted now, using lots of different methods, and their survival. Wildlife Trusts and other NGOs developing a gold carbon standard. Forest 4 Cornwall are running pilot schemes to test different planting techniques which OB is involved with.
4	<p>Isles of Scilly (verbal updates)</p> <p>TS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change Action plan going to full Council next week for final adoption and approval. • Waiting on a natural evidence report from ERCISS collating ecological and habitats data from across the islands. Can share report later this month.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LNRS – working with PH and team and have local nature recovery survey which can be contributed to. • AONB has a new interim chair, Paul St Pierre, and is recruiting for permanent chair. The partnership is reviewing the government’s response to the Glover Review. <p>JB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stronger links between organisations on the Islands, greater involvement from farmers; a discussion about how to form effective farm cluster network to take advantage of ELMs next year. • Spoken to forum of elected members re what can be done for wildlife. • WT – island of Annet has a rat free status resulting in increase of Manx Shearwater; hoping to bring back bigger colony to IoS. Promotion opportunity for the LNP. <p>CIr SW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IFCA - difficulty funding for IFCA; losing 85% of new burdens funding. • Climate Adaption Scilly project – going ahead, had meeting on Bryher which went well and the project is going ahead. Final financial commitment from EA awaited. <p>Board Member comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IM offer of support to TS for State of Nature report through the Evidence Group and University of Exeter. • SR undertook a state of marine environment with IFCA a few years ago and offered to send through data to TS.
5	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) (paper circulated)</p> <p>Robert Lacey delivered a presentation after introducing the item as one of the biggest opportunities to grow back diversity in Cornwall, and work to undo damage.</p> <p>The BNG requirement comes through the Environment Act of November 2021 but not mandated by that for another 2 years. It is imbedded in the 1990 town and country planning act requiring a minimum of 10% net gain. Gains are required to be achieved and maintained over a 30 year period. CC introduced BNG in 2020 and applies to all major development categories. Strengthens NERC Act; adding additional weight to CC duties and introduces 5 year reporting cycle to report on net gains. Allows development of habitat banks and introduces conservation covenants, adding an additional layer of protection.</p> <p>How does it differ from existing practice?</p> <p>It applies to all development and includes a variable monitoring requirement. Land has to be identified at the time. Additional monitoring frameworks from November 2023 and there will be additional burdens for administering it. Climate Change DPD – a set of policies to address climate change have been developed; 4 policies on natural climate solution.</p> <p>Issues:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conditions and monitoring – currently can only use existing planning tools until the regulation is brought into force.

2. Can't use statutory condition so biodiversity plan has to be submitted (and details of net gain and losses) at the time of the planning application rather than post permission.
3. Enforcement workloads are large and resources reduced. BNG heavy on administration and ecology resources too. Need for monitoring too.
4. 2 years on, who will be responsible for maintenance when it's not the developer – maintenance company, etc.
5. Expectations of what BNG will look like. Expectation that 50% of net gain will be provided off site.
6. Role of Cornwall Council?
7. Small sites included but no off-setting possible.
8. Consideration needs to be given to the best use of additional burdens.

What's next

Planning policy continue to work with EG team to create a joint response to the net gain consultation needs to be submitted by 5 April. Guidance work is coming to the end. RT - practical example would be good.

Board Member comments:

- MA – with this introduction it ensures developers do not get an opportunity to change the site before putting in their BNG. It is now possible to look at biodiversity on that site from 2020.
- IM – look out for high nature value habitats which require active management; can't see how that would work in terms of active interventions. Could be problematic on sites of high nature value. Likely to be away from development. Active management is not easy to solve but through LNRS will see how it can be addressed, if it can.
- MH – development of habitat banks will be a demand for offsetting within farmland particularly on value sites for offsetting. 75% land is farmland but there are competing land uses and inability of Defra to allow double funding where some have already signed up to Countryside Stewardship Schemes. With habitat bank - is there enough physical land to put it on? Additional/stacking benefits issue needs to be resolved by Defra. Competing land uses – Rob Lacey will continue to raise through consultation processes.
- SM – learning from maintenance and management of SUDS and some of issues to follow up when developers move on, etc. Could be opportunity to learn from.
- Lisa Goodall could help re EA work in Devon around biosphere/ a marketplace for environmental outcomes and could link to list of projects that need funding for developers to bid into. RL will take this away to continue to think but learning would be helpful. PH also politically gains needs to be close to the losses – part of the feasibility work being undertaken.
- CC – CWT, NT and RSPB already commits to land doing more for biodiversity. Will work alongside authority however will require methodology for monitoring and measuring improvement to be closely watched.
- NB-W – most habitats need good active management to retain their value. Habitats managed badly could result in net loss. Good monitoring, enforcement and ecological support – so LNP to advocate for appropriate level of support and funding is important.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KB – is there any evidence of BNG well executed as estate agents etc, to be seen as positive in a more voluntary way. There is some evidence that biodiverse areas and well looked after areas do add value and some developers enthusiastic and others are not. Barratts have dedicated people working on BNG on their sites, for example. • Neil – biodiversity won't be seen on the site until later. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognise and support the work being carried out on BNG 2. Make formal response on consultation and recognise and support the work. AGREED <p>ACTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SF/PH – issue on active management to be taken forward for 5 April consultation • Circulate presentation and paper – LG
6	<p>Summit RT gave an overview.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some Board Members have signed up already. There will be a panel session, those that are happy to be on panel please let RT and PH know. 2. This summit is a start. Bring more people on board during the year, major landowners and communities. 3. Hybrid event and the in person tickets are pretty much sold out but there are unlimited online tickets. 4. Speakers: Megan McCubbin and Will Coleman. Awaiting national policy context speaker. If anyone has a contact please let PH know. 5. 24 confirmed speakers across business, landowners, communities, schools, etc. 6. Allowed a long lunch break for networking and tree planting. 7. Workshops: Conversation with the LNP board; Empowering Communities to deliver for nature; businesses and what they can do for nature. 8. More details to go out. Banner space – let LG know. 9. Lots of individual pledges have been made plus 14 major partners and 9 businesses. 10. Refreshments – looking at options 11. Website – pledge more obvious if possible. PH 12.
7	<p>Roundtable:</p> <p>CC - Mostly budget and business planning. Fire at Rosenannon Downs.</p> <p>MA – heritage strategy just completed prior to consultation and sign off at Cabinet in May. Will be live at Let's Talk link for public consultation soon. Pleased with the strategy connecting heritage and environment. Cornwall AONB action plan Cabinet sign off in May; it's a brilliant document created by Emma Browning.</p> <p>SM – focus on regulatory role in press; major investigation with water companies, as well as OFWAT. SWW is not one of those but looking at operations. Responded to a board member enquiry re CSO. Local priority to recognise link between agriculture, nature and biodiversity - influencing agriculture and its regulation (more officers enforcing farming rules for water and slurry storage). Climate Change adaptation – committed to be net zero organisations particularly around flooding. Carbon literacy training to help to enable nature based solutions and BNG. Green skills – challenge with not getting enough interest/not enough applicants – LNP can help to share.</p> <p>KB – on deep dive by Covia – in touch with Carl Warom. Getting interesting survey responses if sharing board member email can connect. Sessions at college on land based strategy, SM</p>

shortage evidence to KB for this session. Trees – enthusiasm but not a depth of understanding about biodiversity for nature. Workshop – if one to cover green skills and KB can attend and happy to be on Panel.

WS – NE funding – uplift in funding from last year will hopefully be the same for next 3 years. Most funding targeted at new areas of work. Pressures around core areas of work, statutory duties, farm advice, etc. Large recruitment exercise but some areas in SW struggled to recruit into re skills combining farm advice with ecological expertise. Launch of landscape recovery element of ELMs covering 2 aspects, river restoration and species recovery. Lots of work nationally re agricultural transition. Hoping to soon publish nutrient neutrality which affects Cornwall (Camel and Camel catchments). In January published Climate Change action plan. G7 – working on future funding of the legacy projects. Penwith Moors, SSSI work ongoing. BNG important change in way planning and land use planning can help to address biodiversity losses; NE working with Defra around biodiversity metric.

SR – with Exeter have extended SW environment economic prosperity to end of January next year. SW marine ecosystems webinars coming up. Developing a proposal for offshore wind - ecosystem effects, starting to develop science to feed into offshore floating wind designs. Call out for joint doctoral training partnership looking for CASE partners to support projects around sustainable management for marine resources. If board members have any projects that they would like funded put in now. Feeding into 2022-2025 NERC strategy strengthening case for funding regional crossover projects. Business cases around blue carbon, low impact fishing and marine protected areas.

ACTION: Marine focus session for future board meeting. SR & PH to discuss

SW – trees – local authorities encourage 70 trees to celebrate Jubilee on IoS not enough land and could be handed over to Duchy. Summit – unable to attend but recognise it is online.

IM – close to end of work for G7 legacy project around historic (1800s) mapping turning into digital format. IPCC working group to climate change report came out (impacts, adaptations and vulnerabilities) – starkest warning yet.

TS – link to Nature Recovery Survey in chat.

NB-W – Green skills – difficulty in recruitment. ELMs trial - landscape recovery pilots there are 3 or 4 across UK (Dorset is closes). Soon to release some results from polling on attitudes to national parks and AONBs. Awaiting Nature Green Paper. Early warning re energy security and impacts on nature.

MH – changing dynamic in food production, in Western world with possible food shortages. Food production and nature recovery – survival rather than sustainable. Diesel price and supplies are real issues for agriculture. Glover consultation important - document has to be back by 9 April.

OB – more focus on what MH has just said. Haven't had FIPI meeting maybe lost momentum? CC and CWT thank you to them as part of G7 legacy now talking about whole farm survey by FWAG report to NE and now talking about whole farm which is outside a designated area. Carbon literacy training good. Concerns re warnings from IPPC and Chatham House last autumn.

JB – recruitment on IoS. Because of housing crisis on IoS likely need to recruit from on those already living on IoS and developing green skills within their roles.

PH – developing Fal landscape recovery proposals with major landowners there, looking to put in bid with partners. Involved in river restoration master planning activities with EA. CSA awards is 20th year. Preparing for LNR roll out, strategy next steps. Marine surveys and results to share so would welcome future LNP item on this.

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	Dates of next meetings – 10 March 2022, 6 May 2022, 16 June 2022, 16 September 2022, 10 November 2022