



**Meeting notes**

<b>Meeting Title:</b>	<b>Local Nature Partnership Board Meeting</b>
<b>Date:</b>	12 March 2024
<b>Time:</b>	09:00 – 11:30
<b>Location:</b>	MS Teams
<b>Present:</b>	Robin Teverson (Chair), Matt Walpole (MW) – Deputy Chair, Vicky Fraser (VF) – CEO, Cllr Martyn Alvey (MA), Clare Parnell (CP), Rebecca Williams (RW) for Russell Ashman, Julian Branscombe (JB), Cllr Harry Legg (HL), Ilya Maclean (IM), Wesley Smyth (WS), Tim de Winton (TdeW) for Mark Rice, Cherilyn Mackrory (CM) - part
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mark Holmes (MH), Philippa Hoskin (PH), Dougie Handford (DH), Lorna Gaunt (LG) – note taker, Abigail Crosby, Senior Environment Officer (Marine) - observer
<b>Guests:</b>	<b>Item 3</b> - Dr Tiago de Melo Cartaxo, University of Exeter (TdMC) <b>Item 5</b> - Emma Browning (Cornwall National Landscapes Manager) (EB) and Jenny Christie – LNRS Advisor, Natural England (JC)

<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies, items of AOB, Minutes, Matters Arising &amp; Actions and Chair’s report</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Apologies &amp; items for AOB</b> Martin Howlett (MHow), Sian Rees (SR), Phil Mason (PM), Nick Lawrence (NL)
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Minutes of previous Board Meeting</b> Minutes approved
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Matters Arising and Actions</b> All actions complete or in progress except RT to speak to MA about County Farms
<b>1.4</b>	<b>Chair’s report</b> (full report circulated with the board papers) Taken as read.
<b>2</b>	<b>Board Membership - welcome and farewell</b> RT thanked Wesley Smyth for representing Natural England on the board for the last 7 years and his invaluable input. He would be missed. The board wished him well in his retirement. WS in return expressed his appreciation for being involved in such a proactive and active partnership.

	<p>RT welcomed Dr Rebecca Lovell to the board. RL gave an overview of her field of work – looking at links between environmental influences and health, green social prescribing, and working with policy bodies on how nature can help to deliver for our health locally. RT said the LNP is looking forward to RL driving forward this important area of work.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Environmental Enforcement and Compliance report (the UoE report and LNP report were included in papers)</b></p> <p>Cllr MA, Board Champion, explained this piece of work had been commissioned by the LNP to explore the perceived reduction of effectiveness in environmental enforcement across the region. It was commissioned by the LNP, paid for by Cornwall Council and match funded by the University of Exeter.</p> <p>Dr Tiago de Melo Cartaxo (TdMC) gave a presentation, the main points were: The research focussed on understanding the state of play in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, to look at the challenges, examples of good practice here, and other places in UK, with the aim of providing some practical policy recommendations. The research was focussed on nature and biodiversity.</p> <p>Information was collected from the seven named public authorities identified by the Environmental Enforcement and Compliance Steering Group, for which they were thanked. The data provided showed an overall downturn trend. The challenges identified were reductions in funding, issues around skills gap in enforcement roles and support in those roles, the complexity of the sector, overlapping jurisdiction, and risks of repetition of work from another authority.</p> <p>UofE report recommendations were: to set up a centralised website; provide an LNP hotline; improve the regional reporting system; address the complexity of overlapping jurisdiction; improve public engagement; address high costs of prosecution; address pay and job satisfaction; and, improve LNPs capabilities and funding.</p> <p>Recommended quick wins were: training, education and communication; joint environmental cases review; clear and simple language; data driven decision making; understanding the differences between prosecution and regularisation.</p> <p>Cllr MA added that we will see an impact from Biodiversity Net Gain in the future. He explained that an illustrative slide would be produced to bring the report to life, with a snapshot that could be printed off/posters to help residents know where to report things.</p> <p><b>Board Members had the following comments:</b></p> <p>TdeW – Congratulations were given on producing the report. This would be taken back to the EA and fed up nationally. TdMC clarified that the report suggested the full cost of the fine should go back into enforcement and that better distribution of funds could be taken up with Government. Also, that funding from Government could be assigned to the EA for enforcement and nationwide studies, to ensure there was a regular review of effectiveness of enforcement. On Case Law TdMC said there were examples in these areas and although courts were becoming bolder it needed to happen more. More reporting or improvements/streamlining in reporting could help the cases to be taken up.</p>

WS – explained there was a massive disparity of bringing enforcement and levies of those successfully prosecuted. With regards to SSSI sites, the public tended to support enforcement action unless it was against individuals which resulted in mixed reporting in the media. Also, Ministers did not always pick up on larger prosecutions. NE’s first response was always to support and advise with enforcement being the last step. It was important to manage expectations, making the public aware that the aim is to regularise before prosecution.

CP – agreed with WS that regularisation for smaller businesses was important – providing knowledge about what they should be doing, in an easily accessible way. Through agencies working with industries consider how the information can be accessed for that sector, on a sector by sector basis.

RL – recommended included including short term and long term goals in the report summary and talk about achievability, and whether the recommendations would require a system change, or local change. Also highlight success potential, who the audience would be, and who could act.

The document would now be taken to the Leadership Board. Volunteers are being sought to be on the enforcement working group. Board members should let LG know if they’re interested.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** (as set out in the LNP report)

1. To note the findings of the report, approve sign off, and share the report with interested parties and contributors, thanking them – **APPROVED**
2. To provide steer on which of the report recommendations to take forward - **To be decided by Enforcement Working Group (see Recommendation 4)**
3. To produce a summary document which sets out the findings of the report and the next steps that the LNP will take - **To be decided by Enforcement Working Group (see Recommendation 4)**
4. To support reconvening the Enforcement Working Group, and that it will become a sub-group of the LNP Board to provide detailed steer on next steps. This will evolve into a multi-agency standing group – **SUPPORTED**
5. That the LNP Chair and Board Champion highlight the issues and opportunities raised in the report, with the relevant organisations and decision-makers at the local and national level – **APPROVED**

**4 Isles of Scilly update (verbal report)**

- Russell Ashman (CIOS CEO) is the new LNP Board Member representing the Council of the Isles of Scilly. Rebecca William (RW) will continue to deputise for him at these meetings.
- Adaptive Scilly Sea Defence project is almost complete and the Climate Adaptation ‘Resilient Island Strategy’ is soon to be adopted by Council. RW thanked Stephen Swabey for his work and wished him well for the future.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There's been some positive work on the LNRS with Cornwall Council and the IOSWT to recruit a member of staff (seconded to Cornwall Council x1 day a week) to focus on the IOS elements of the LNRS</li> <li>• Partnership work through the IOS National Landscapes continues with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ eradication feasibility work progressing with trials on St Helens and Round Island</li> <li>○ recreational disturbance work to sensitive wildlife including focus on the only ringed plover population in the SW</li> <li>○ IOSNL Delivery Plan 24/25 includes management focus on 7 Colchester Declaration Species</li> <li>○ ELMS Landscape Recovery Project 'Small is Beautiful' starts its development phase in June, with recruitment for two roles now active.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>5 Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Steering Group Item</b> (paper circulated in advance of meeting and taken as read)	
<p>PH gave a general update:</p> <p>Using LNRS funding from Defra, and with the help of JB and the IoS Wildlife Trust, and RW and the Council of the IoS, additional capacity (one day a week) has been secured to provide LNRS support and engagement and to ensure integration of the IoS throughout the LNRS.</p> <p>Good progress is being made for developing priority refinement methodology, with the input of experts. More will come back to the Steering Group in due course. Further analysis of engagement results is being undertaken.</p> <p>Thanks to IM and UofE, making good progress on network opportunity mapping, with support of taxonomic experts, and aim for mapping scenario workshops in June.</p> <p>Coming up next week, there is CloS LNRS Farm Advisors Webinar which is part of the farming engagement activity recommended by CP and MH through the LNP Farming and Landowner Working Group.</p> <p>Had an annual 1:1 with Defra policy leads, as the responsible authority. They verbally confirmed an anticipated second year of new burdens funding for developing the LNRS. They were pleased with progress and noted work on the voluntary marine extension. To ensure a smooth adoption process the team will reflect on key milestones and timelines for signing off the LNRS. An initial discussion was had about what happens after adoption and potential role for Local Authorities.</p> <p><b>Voluntary Marine Extension</b></p> <p>Thanks to Abigail Crosby for her work on what the marine extension really means. PH did a quick recap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The State of Nature shows there's significant pressures at sea in Cornwall and it is known that there are fragile systems relying on marine habitats on the IoS.</li> <li>• Environmental Growth KPI shows that 35.63% of inshore marine areas are in a designated protected area and only about 8% are considered to be well managed.</li> </ul>	

- Engagement work shows marine and coastal areas are important to stakeholders across Cornwall and Isles of Scilly.
- Coastal and marine prominence will help to catalyse collaboration to deliver 30 by 30 targets.
- There are marine statutory measures on the horizon, including the marine net gain.
- Complimentary initiatives which will help to inform LNRS marine element including national marine natural capital ecosystem assessment.
- Marine Coastal Partnership which can drive marine element of LNRS and its delivery.
- Challenges: lack of national consistency and guidance, statutory framework, and voluntary aspect to ensure engagement with fishers and renewables, etc. availability of data (format), resources.

**The Steering Group had the following input:**

1. SR was unable to make the meeting and provided feedback by email which PH would pick up with SR. ACTION: PH to respond to SR
2. Question: what tools for change would be available if the marine extension was adopted? Answer: possibly some form of material planning consideration, help towards marine spatial planning, and setting out the standards and collective agreement of what is expected from marine spatial planning in the region. Create pathway for marine net gain and could guide appropriate locations for projects. ACTION: PH to check certainty of point around planning
3. Comment: the extension could help with discussions around water quality and how catchments are managed (what happens on land and impact on estuaries and inshore waters). Fishing presents the greatest pressure on the condition and quality and management of MPAs. The extension would present an opportunity to highlight the ambition around working with IFCAs and the fishing industry and the delivery of 30% of seas to be better managed. Also, the need for continuing productive discussion with regulators and industry about the way the fishing industry is managed in Cornwall and IoS. Response: PH had recently attended a Fisheries Stakeholder Group meeting attended by IFCAs and trade industry representatives and had high level conversation around this and aims to continue engagement at that level rather than reach out to individual fishers.
4. Query: Will the Marine Nature Recovery Network come later? Response: the team are working in tandem with terrestrial work so it will be adopted at the same time. Marine opportunity maps may not be possible due to lack of funding.
5. Query: LNRS review period? Response: between 3 and 10 years and is at the discretion of the minister.
6. Query: Is government prepared to help with funding for a marine extension? Answer: No but there is government support through marine natural capital ecosystem assessment, for example.
7. Question: the contentious issue of seaweed farms - where does that fit in terms of the LNRS marine extension or could the LNP have a view on this? The community were not consulted and information about whether it is good/bad/or neutral was hard to find. Answer: a) this was raised at the last LNP Executive Meeting and in Westminster. On behalf of the LNP PH's team has arranged for various environmental organisations to formulate guidance for applicants and will be

signed off by the Board (by email). The LNRS will not refer to specific initiatives, it will set out the areas where conservation needs to be considered. JC added "The Strategy description should include local threats to nature (which could reference novel issues such as seaweed farming)". WS – it is neither good nor bad, it's about scale, timing and location and more broadly can lead to other conversations around the way in which marine environment is managed.

8. The Marine Coastal Partnership highlighted need for spatial planning at sea. CWT are very much aware of the seaweed farm issue. Addressing key principles for marine development is important in these cases such as looking at environmental impact assessments (from CWT perspective impacts on marine species and habitats). As well as a need for guidance around state of knowledge it would also be helpful to know what applicants and MMO should be looking out for, impact assessment and also monitoring mitigation plans, for example.
9. IoS – had a meeting with IoS IFCA regarding NE recommendation to make some Marine Conversation Zones no take zones, however there was a strong feeling from IFCA and industry that this would push it outside of the MCZ and not decrease the pressure, so they're looking at better management over whole area rather than that small area.

Any further feedback after the meeting is welcomed.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** There were no objections to any of the recommendations.

1. Acknowledges the results of public engagement and importance of continued work towards the voluntary marine extension of the LNRS
2. Supports the integration of the marine area in the description of the strategy area, facts and figures, spotlight sections and images throughout the strategy.
3. Supports the establishment of a marine LNRS working group as a task and finish group of the emerging MCP to provide expert support for the voluntary marine extension. Attendance at the first workshop set for the 21st of March 2024, 2pm-3.30pm, online.
4. Supports the creation of an existing nature network map of best areas for nature at sea as per section 1.5.
5. Will review options for creation of the marine nature recovery opportunity map following input from experts and outputs of complimentary initiatives using best available evidence.
6. Supports proportionate communication and engagement about the voluntary marine extension of the LNRS, to reflect its non-statutory status and limited resources.
7. Receives ongoing updates on work towards delivery of marine nature recovery and progress towards the marine 30x30 target.
8. Supports continued work to catalyse action via existing initiatives and networks, including Cornwall Council's response to their motion for the ocean.
9. Continues to support and promote Cornwall and Isles of Scilly as national leaders in driving action towards a healthy and well managed marine environment.



	<p>IM introduced this item – the purpose of the report is to show how the CloS 30 by 30 target aligns with Defra’s. Three important points were that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Although the metric seems straightforward the data isn’t available to quantify which areas are well managed for nature and which aren’t. What’s desirable to measure is not always the same as what can be measured.</li> <li>2. There is a sliding scale for reporting whether land is well managed for nature or not. Because our nature is depleted the bar needs to be set against the more pragmatic end of the sliding scale but to reverse the decline in biodiversity the bar would need to be set higher. A subjective decision needs to be made about where the bar should be set. Defra guidance is at more pragmatic end of spectrum.</li> <li>3. The indicator in Cornwall is sensitive to what is included in terms of agricultural tiers; which tiers go into the metric and which go out. Another piece of work is needed to unpick the detail of ELM to determine what parts constitute what is well managed for nature.</li> </ol> <p>DH went through the categorisation in the UK Government’s target which is made up of three measures: 1) Areas UK currently counts as contributing to 30 by 30; 2) have potential to contribute to 30 by 30, and 3) Potential areas not currently included in the map.</p> <p>DH highlighted that the list of designations is broad and includes areas not necessarily chosen for biodiversity value, due to OECMs. Protected landscapes and National Landscapes come under measure 2 in the whole, however locally this has been avoided due to known variation of biodiversity value in the landscapes. It is worth noting the difference between the use of current and potential measures, referring back to the all-important sliding scale of value for nature. Nature recovery is a journey.</p> <p>DH presented a slide showing the analysis of similarity between the Cornwall and IoS measure and UK Government measure. There was some broad similarity but some key differences especially around protected sites, condition of SSSIs, and farming. There are a selection of measures that government considers in its target that CloS does not.</p> <p>Farming - the UK government’s paper is acknowledged and they want to explore role of farming tenancies and shorter term management agreements within target which could lead to light touch measures through SFI payments, for example. Measure in CloS is set quite high (considering high tier Countryside Stewards and Environment Schemes) but with ELMs rollout high tier versions might go. Nature recovery projects - in government’s paper key caveat should be supported by NE or Defra which might enable G7 Project, Forest for Cornwall, etc.</p> <p>Needs to be brought back to board for debate. <b>ACTION:</b> LG to note</p>
7	<p><b>Roundtable</b> (verbal updates and CEO report)</p> <p>Board members gave updates</p>
8	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>None</p>