

South Yorkshire Local Nature Partnership

MINUTES: BOARD MEETING – Monday 3rd August 2020

Board Members Present: Liz Ballard (Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust) – Chair, David Edwards (Doncaster MBC), Daniel Hartley (Sheffield City Council), Melissa Massarella (Doncaster MBC), Crispin Thorn (Forestry Commission), Brian Tinnion (independent), Pete Wall (Dearne Valley Trust)

Also present: Garreth Bruff (Sheffield City Region), Ian Cracknell (Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust), Trevor Mayne (BMBC), Lisa Kerslake (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust) – present for part of meeting

Apologies: Dave Aspinall (SCC), Kevin Burke (Rotherham MBC), Catherine Hammond (SHU), Alison Holt (SHU), Paula Tweed (BMBC), Chris Wilson (SCC)

2. Minutes of last meeting, actions and matters arising

PW updated re: HS2 subgroup re: work done. Meeting with HS2 1st June, can share minutes with anyone signed up to NDA. Has since spoken to MM who was not at original meeting. Issues are whether potential scheme at North Ings suitable re: feasibility and timing of feasibility as may disrupt design work. JB put in touch with Tim Andrews, EA Officer working with HS2. How would be funded, BNG? Potentially also as compensation for Sheffield and Rotherham work disruption.

MM asked who instigated the meeting? PW recapped previous presentation by Chris Marshall (NE) and Joseph Buckman (EA). Want to build in risk, NRN etc.

LB summarised previous disappointing meetings with HS2 Ltd

PW still much uncertainty. North Ings included in online mapping, chosen as part of community project.

LB recapped re: GCN DLL item w/ Craig Thomas and asked for any updates since from LAs.

TM still awaiting a meeting to be called, Helen Markland was asking for interest and Andy Godfrey also interested.

LK – CIEEM have issued a revised position statement re: some concerns about DLL, which LB acknowledged.

LB summarised background to Nature North, group of NGOs/organisations working together on green recovery/green new deal agenda. 11 LEPs, 5 metropolitan mayors in the north. LB in group, raising voice of sector, flag up nature crisis and seeking better investment. Current emphasis on trying to engage with LEPs/mayors, with some support from HLF for secretariat role to enable this. Letter went out to LEPs and mayors, awaiting responses - LB to share. IPPR report, series of northern environment papers separate to Nature North, last paper recognised need for large scale northern group, Nature North recognised they could be vehicle for this.

Actions of previous meeting:

Re: LH to check with PWC - LB and Tim Newton spoke with PWC, useful discussion re: green recovery opportunities in SY. GB added PWC work was evidence gathering for formation of Renewal Action Plan - a combined authority and mayor action plan re: recovery of Covid-19 and wider economic issues, SCR and government, spending, business support, strand of work around woodland creation and environment. Focus is economic but is much more environment orientated than similar previous reports – GB to circulate.

LB asked is whether comments would be best coming from the LNP? GB replied would want to do through LNP board - mapping, BNG etc has to be part of, flood risk etc. Needs individual organisations to approach SCR in own right - pulling together info over coming weeks and months. Lead is policy team in Combined Authority, Laurie Heykoop. GB will provide more info and contacts when he circulates. LB – if SCR could take info back from group, decisions can be much more informed at landscape scale and add value to join together. Clear outcomes for Net Gain, NRN etc – could think about development of the LNP strategy.

LB shared LA email contacts with Craig Thomas

IC shared climate emergency links

CT has followed up on action re: tree felling, needs more time for data crunching and another officer to report back – next meeting.

Actions:

LB - to circulate Nature North letter

GB - to circulate Renewal Action Plan and additional info

CT - to report back on tree felling in SY

3. Approach to woodland felling in SY

Item to be carried over to next meeting.

4. SYLNP Strategy & Sheffield City Region Update

GB detailed number of different strands, good progress made for natural capital mapping exercise to evidence baselines, colleagues at Doncaster driving to SY level rather than individual district level. SY approach to biodiversity mapping linked to woodland creation. Looking at mapping, value of services, opportunities to develop/build network and bring together in one map to show where investment will have greatest impact. Funding – putting together small amounts from Woodland Trust, Peel Group for example, in principle support from EA/NE but needs clarifying in financial terms, need to go through commission in process. Combined Authority will set up steering group so all funders who have agreed to support can inform this.

MM added have made good progress, very positive about going forwards. TM echoed this and thanked GB for his work.

LB asked about budget? GB replied now as good as there - WT £10k, Peel Group £5k, districts £20-25k, £10k from combined authority, coming from Net Zero programme budget. General brief will need turning into approach to tender, relevant to planners and teams leading on climate emergency, woodland creation etc – will provide bases for number of different projects.

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PW asked who are organisations in steering group? Need clarity on projects, tree coordination, mapping rolled into one – good to see how those tasks split for procurement. GB replied anyone contributing to costs needs to be on steering group, work/time capacity allowing. Too large a project to do all strands leading off together. BNG, woodland creation, LNRS to be decided. LB added that the mapping brief clarifies the importance of ground truthing. Mapping is a broad scale piece of work to find indicators/outcomes at city region level, i.e. sequestration for example. Will then need on the ground checking – needs to be complementary. Need to agree principles and limitations of the mapping before use.

PW asked re: steering group, which organisations included? LB replied SCR, WT, etc. Request from SRWT that the SY Wildlife Trusts are included in developing the NRN approach. Perhaps Philip Whelpdale or Pete Wall – subgroup around biodiversity mapping to engage with consultant?

GB replied not a prescriptive approach, won't replace organisations own mapping site by site. Steering group will project manage, and then those who deliver can engage to inform the project further.

PW added important to ensure compatibility, protocol for handing info over. LK reiterated want to be actively involved.

GB raised Renewal Action Plan (RAP) – can circulate and discuss delivery plans at next meeting.

Actions:

LH - is there an opportunity/mechanism for LNP to develop themes in the SCR Plan in relation to nature based solutions, climate emergency etc?

GB – to circulate Renewal Action Plan and discuss in agenda item at next meeting.

5. Approach to Biodiversity Net Gain in South Yorkshire;

LB noted date to be fixed for next meeting and asked for feedback from Heads of Planning (HoP) meeting.

TM recapped aim and background of BNG Task & Finish group which has now been working together for over one year. Mapping came out of group, also set up for online training due to Covid-19, AH/Jon Goodrick of Wildscapes produced a training session in July. HoP meeting, in Barnsley had 3 planning applications with biodiversity metrics, major developer last week put in for a large warehouse off J36 of M1 with expected biodiversity policy. Looking like will have guidance for HoP, planning advice note, all LAs develop own tool via SPDs etc, increasingly recognising links to other strands, NRN etc.

BT asked for more detail on how this works re: Wentworth? TM replied have had application for housing on land owned by Fitzwilliam Wentworth, working with them to find compensation sites nearby, but not always possible to do this. If housing application comes in where landowner doesn't have this, will be problematic.

GB replied work has engaged LAs, lot of people from NE, EA, wider range of stakeholders and lots of drivers to move quickly. Doncaster Local Plan at critical stage, planning applications as described by TM etc. HoP meeting had 3 key streams. 1) Policy; driving policy advice note, interim document to collect info together. Dearne Valley, other groups and orgs, policy principles,

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adapt backed up by evidence and info at SY level. 2) BNG metric – Defra 2.0, needs work to understand wider programme of work to upskill LAs, not reinvent wheel. 3) Mapping and evidence. HoP response is that is a no-brainer, sensible to push ahead. Is a capacity issue, officers very stretched, advice note will need help to manage that. Hope is to draw on collective knowledge to take forward.

MM to take over from TM as Chair of BNG Task and Finish group.

LB asked whether next meeting to take place in August, which TM confirmed.

BT asked if previous South Yorkshire Forest Partnership info accessible? LB SYFP archive in SCC Planning department – did ask if we could access, data protection issues difficulties prevented progress. May be out of date as 2012 or older.

TM added BMBC did have mapping outputs from SYFP. Will speak with colleague Marcus Langley to try and obtain info he has.

DH to look into where data is held at SCC and see if he can access.

LB asked for an update on engagement from NE re: NRN and Net Gain.

TM replied have a named contact, not actively engaged. Will follow up.

LB now a number of pilot LNRS areas but not SY unfortunately – Greater Manchester, Cumbria, Northumberland. Would be good to speak with them to find out how progressing.

Actions:

TM to follow up with NE contact re: NRN and Net Gain.

TM to speak with Marcus Langley to try and obtain SYFP mapping outcome data.

DH to look into where data is held at SCC and see if he can access.

6. Woodland Creation

LB recapped work developments, SRWT has signed MOU with MCA to secure condition for woodland creation post, Woodland Trust have sent their support for post plus £10k commitment for mapping. Now ready to recruit for post. SRWT, MCA, WT – steering group of partners, funding. Those around LNP table – still to be decided. Woodland Creation will need to draw on mapping at high level, looking at right places, ground level trothing for appropriateness for tree planting, fitting with LA planning etc, over and above LA plans. Good potential in Doncaster where lower % cover. Recruitment paperwork doing rounds, going to advertise shortly. Will share recruitment info with LNP.

Will still be looking to talk with LAs to revert 2-year post back to 3-year post as originally proposed.

CT added Defra and FC continuing to push planting nationally, good opportunity to connect national opportunities with local/regional. Sam Cooper has been successful in securing the recent recruitment for a new Partnership and Expertise Manager for Yorkshire. Sam formally takes on his role on the 1st September and is currently the Field Manager for Yorkshire so is well engaged with our delivery work in SY. CT to send details to IC for sharing. Sam was Field Officer, looking

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to replace role. Capacity is issue – recruiting new roles to manage national planting programme.

BT raised a webinar run by RICS he took part in, featuring John Lockhart on woodland creation, England Tree Strategy out for consultation. Went into details on where to plant, where getting trees from etc.

CT responded England Tree Strategy consultation running June – 11 September 2020, will send link to share with group. £640m is part of restoration fund, funding English tree planting programme. Joining the dots important – nurseries, what do they need to enable increase of planting ambition's 7-10k increase hectares, significant government investment.

Actions:

LB/IC to share Woodland Creation post with LNP.

LB/IC to share Defra webinar slides re Nature Strategy/NRN and LNRS

BT to share RICS webinar details

7. Local Authorities' Climate Emergency Action Plans

MM updated climate statement now on DMBC website. Strategy to link in with climate and biodiversity work, coming stage for document, have put LNP down as stakeholder.

TM added BMBC work on climate change with 2030 aims through two groups – Positive Climate Group (Zero 40) – the Council's own aims - and the Zero Climate Group (Zero 45) – borough and partners. Carbon assessment for all future projects with aspiration of 'do no harm'.

LB followed re: SCC as is on Sheffield Green City Partnership. Focused on climate change, Net Zero by 2035, focus on work by AMP + Ricardo to produce carbon budgeting info, looking at carbon budget per year, forecasting, where emissions from, altering policies and what impact it would have, public transport, heating system using incinerator, modelling. Useful to highlight opportunities, not looking so much at land use, transport and bigger industries is focus. Starting to shape, hasn't gone public yet and no citizens' forum as yet.

LB asked if LAs working collaboratively on climate? SCC about to commission £14m of concrete for flood mitigation – thinking about carbon assessment.

TM person leading on climate emergency also producing carbon impact assessment. Noted report on Today Programme re: details of government trying to tackle increase from SUVs, motor industry impact is big. Covid and scrutiny of town centre buildings, effect probably underreported in public forum.

LB contacted by SY Green Deal, groundswell public movement allied to nature/climate emergency wanting to engage with LAs. LB and Mark Jones attended, massively oversubscribed, much interest.

GB added re: collaboration, Net Zero framework signed by 4 LA leaders, all pushing ahead on own agenda but carbon sequestration on agenda. Combined Authority accepted new energy strategy, does have some high level aims. Desire in some areas to see high level leadership for, steering group with universities, CLG identified shovel-ready projects for SY, concrete for flood risk, £ for projects around SCR framework.

TM noted NE contact for BNG is Kate Wheeler, Lead Advisor for Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire and who will attend next Task & Finish group. Also added Public Tree Health team

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identified areas of increased disease affecting larch trees, number of Yorkshire sites being looked at, climate issues.

LB asked if could also be tree health issues/info to be shared at next meeting?

CT happy to share details specific to SY.

8. AOB/Future agenda items/date of next meeting

AOB:

BT noted report in local paper that marsh harriers roosting at Old Moor for first time.

LB noted bearded vulture previously roosting in Sheffield area, now in Derbyshire.

Future agenda items:

SCR Renewal Action Plan

LNRS

BNG update

Mapping update

Woodland creation

Tree felling in SY

Tree health issues

HS2

Date of next meeting:

Doodle Poll of potential dates to be sent out following the meeting.

Actions:

IC - send Doodle Poll for next LNP meeting