

# South Yorkshire Local Nature Partnership

## **MINUTES: BOARD MEETING – Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022, 10am – 12pm**

### **Virtual meeting on Zoom**

**Board Members Present:** Liz Ballard (Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust) – Chair, Kevin Burke (Rotherham MBC), Michael Johnson (SCC), Melissa Massarella (Doncaster MBC), Nick Sellwood (Woodland Trust), Paula Tweed (Barnsley MBC), Tom Wild (The University of Sheffield), Mike Winstanley (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust)

**Also present:** Ian Cracknell (SRWT) – Secretariat, Anthony Downing (EA), Angus Hunter (SCC), Jenny Longley (EA), Helen Markland (RMBC), Roy Mosley (SRWT), Matt North (SRWT), Catherine Nuttgens (SCC), Liam O'Reilly (NE), Pete Tomlin (SRWT)

**Apologies:** Helen Batt (EA), Hazel Earnshaw (YW), Catherine Hammond (SHU), Laurie Heykoop (SY MCA), Alison Holt (Nature Based Solutions), Tim Myatt (YW), Brian Tinnion (independent), Crispin Thorn (Forestry Commission)

### **2. Minutes of last meeting, actions and matters arising**

Still interest in presentation from Alex Forrest at MCA re transport? NS said he would still be interested re: carbon, wider matters. LOR and MM both agreed.

Pete T followed up with Richard Sulley. LB: good idea to keep up with this re: carbon and metrics for LNRS

Invitation from Regional Climate Forum – Land, Food, Nature and Water – any interest from LNP in attending that forum?

LOR attends group alongside a colleague, Land Food Nature and Water is one group, very cross-sector, a lot of people from outside – nature plays a role in most conversations so recommends attendance.

NS added colleague Richard Callaghan offered to attend as rep.

TW asked how much is decision making, strategy, delivery etc, helpful to have back-up/continuity so would be happy to act as a stand-in or back-up.

LOR displayed a slide re: Y&H regional policy forum.

LB asked how LNP feels about CH as rep with TW as back-up? LNP agreed.

### **Actions:**

**IC** to invite Alex Forrest to next LNP for short presentation

**Pete T** to follow up with LH re metrics

**LB** to provide contact with CH and TW, to provide update to board following each meeting.

### **3. New Board Member Proposals**

EA carrying over

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PDNPA – approach for rep re: connectivity with LNRS and NRN? TW and NS supportive, NS noted important to be aware of their capacity.

MW asked where NT, RSPB and DCRT are in these discussions? AD DCRT had been previously invited and attended once, now have catchment officer who he is engaged with so can invite.

Angus also commented re: Sorby and SBSG.

TW noted 7-7-7 model to ensure cross-sector representation

### **Actions:**

AD to invite DCRT

LB to invite RSPB and PDNPA

## **4. Partner Updates**

### **HM – BNG**

Consultation on BNG regulations and implementation by 5 April – anyone involved in BNG should look at these docs, agree/disagree with approach so now is time to shape. Stacking of credits – HM has fundamental problem with this, no formal planning re: carbon loss to be quantified, counter intuitive as will be net loss of carbon. Helpful annexes – table on LA data reporting expectations, breakdown of habitats, location of BNGs, monitoring results, whether meeting targets. Is also draft BNG useful template. Each LA will receive £10,047 for additional ecology capacity needs, email went to LA finance end Feb, deadline to invoice Defra back is 31 March. If struggling to find details, have contact at Defra. Trying to find out if one off payment or ongoing funding level?

LB added have not planned a LNP consultation response – should we approach with own organisational responses? HM individual orgs would be worthwhile, quite accessible document worth reading and finding out if orgs planning to respond.

LB WTs nationally and locally, NS - WT, SCC – AH

Discussion then took place about sharing a response internally? LB said should be able to share TWT response, added LNP Duty To Cooperate.

A short discussion took place about stacking issue.

LOR said NE will be putting in own response. Joint LNP response would be useful to reduce burden of all independent responses. HM will aim to share draft response with LNP

LB is BNG group still sharing draft policies? HM other 3 LAs have not had much capacity for ecologists to attend meetings, am progressing and going out to consultation soon.

AH said would be happy to start discussing across LAs and boundaries asap.

LB wondering if anyone from MCA to be involved, Ryan Shephard?

### **MW – Humberhead Levels**

Area 25/30 percent of region under designation, fenland, massively farmed, lots of potential for biodiversity mitigation, lots of opportunity to restore, HH levels partnership has had a reset to look at as a whole and how can also improve air/water quality and work with farmers. Secured £0.5m through Defra (?) discovery grant, baseline data for restoration grant, start with farmers, rewet etc. Cross border works required to succeed, size and scale can be overwhelming at times but needs to be done at this scale. Important not to lose sight of works on the ground. 11 NRs in Barnsley area, partnership ready to go, good position to deliver work.

LB responded in agreement as inspiring and important update. Would be good to have workshop on what content of strategy might be, TOR and responsibilities may not be fully nailed down, understand difficulties re LAs but does that need to stop discussions, look spatially with maps, get

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NR mapping work and start unpicking. Are we heading in that direction, perhaps half day workshop in May for ambitions in SY?  
TW supportive, especially in person. Offer of venue at Potteric Carr from Mike Winstanley.

### **Actions:**

**HM** to report back on BNG draft response

**IC Pete T** and **MW** to follow up on workshop planning and dates

## **5. Nature Recovery Networks and Strategies**

Pete T reminded re MCA taking paper to board on 24th March, discussion as with or without Defra approval as responsible auth. Defra put together paper, Laurie has submitted to board for 21<sup>st</sup> but currently on annual leave so won't hear response until after that. MCA to be responsible authority with some caveats. Should MCA sign this off, we will be able to continue work during purdah and won't be held up by elections.

Mapping workshop 23rd March aimed at current working group, unblock issues re: sharing, partners getting use of maps, working collectively. Hosted by RMBC at Clifton Park Museum with Pete Spriggs facilitating again.

Did send email re GCRF project extension to end May, some crossover to bridge gap until MCA able to fully take over.

AH draft SPB for planning, pretty much have network, transport, RSC, Network Rail, linear corridor management, feel quite ahead of the game, had meeting with planning with good alignment. Need to finalise with planning before going into consultation.

MJ took legal advice on what can do around SPD, case law from 2019 which clarified re SPD what can/can't do - can't go beyond own planning policy in requirements. Reading around Options, will align ecology/planning- probably with an interim guidance note – heard positive feedback on this from Bristol LA as effective resource to bridge gap. Consistency as delivery vehicle though common language as much as possible.

LO asked MJ what guidance note will cover?

MJ came out of climate response net zero work, to try and up standards and expectations from a net gain point of view, climate/nature and approach to city and expectations changing so including net gain, currently unsure of content but will look at how instructive that is to allow some flexibility, net gain hierarchy and expectations, then link in to NRN and opportunities that flow in from that, would expect Defra template as helpful.

LO offered contact re: examples they may be able to offer.

LB asked re methodology join-up with other LAs through workshop. MJ clear steer with other LAs will be very useful for approach to workshop.

LOR updated on regional new LNRS advisors, one on paternity leave until end April. Phil Wray, GIS/mapping expertise he will probably take over from LOR on strategy who will move more into delivery/project side of things, still working quite closely together.

LB was a conversation at heads of planning – Defra rep said no timeline/deadline, since then been quite a lot on BNG template/framework in 2 years, so does mean need LNRS in 2 years, so

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do need to go back that timeline – Nov 2023.

LOR also surprised by that but with delays understandable, not required that every strategy to be completed by Nov 2023, more on need like Local Plans – some earlier, some later with agreement from Defra, BNG not having targeting mechanism in short term gap guidance to come forward. Different areas will have different timelines.

TW commented concern re piloting/queueing issue, important not to miss deadline to get required funding.

### **Actions:**

**LH/PeteT/LB** to share update following MCA board meeting re: Responsible Authority paper

## **6. ELMS and Landscape Recovery schemes**

Request from Trevor Mayne at Barnsley re scheme for shared discussion on how this delivers on schemes and share knowledge on where all are on this. Planning focus on BNG perhaps, but may not be aware of changes on agri-env which inputs on planning.

RM detailed new scheme ELMs replacing previous mgmt. schemes – sustainable farming incentive: water quality, biodiversity, ecosystem services, start rolling out this year, most farmland eligible, basic level, small amount of funding, 3 year agreements, can be combined with BNG and other funding, principle but detail to be defined. Pilot this year, roll out in 2024, habitats creation/management, rights of way, species, facilitation working with farmers, spatially prioritised. Currently unclear how link to NRN mapping. Landscape Recovery, delivery of landscape through long term transformative land use projects, looking for pilots between now and 2024, needs 500-5000 ha land. Pilots have 2yr dev funding, long term implementation funding up to 10 yrs, farms, forests, estates, public land owned by LAs, can be existing agri-env scheme but not for projects already paid for. Open for applications now to May for 1<sup>st</sup> tranche of pilots, dev phases will support projects to prepare for deliver, funding arrangements, ecosystems marketing as appropriate.

TW asked question re multiple landowners – landowner continuous is definition

LB asked if anyone doing Defra test and trial or applied for any of ELMS pilots, particularly Landscape Recovery?

MM ELMS test in HH levels, Lincs WT, event on 31 March aimed at land mgrs., conservation sector, 22/23 land managers on HH levels, ecosystem services payments, seems likely will be test and trial.

LOR is Defra run scheme, NE just technical advisors. With Landscape Recovery scheme 15 pilots this year, 15 next year. 2 yr delivery phase, if successful will becoming fully functional scheme. Engaging with farmers and private finance, no reason why couldn't link elms and BNG together. Want good quality apps in, success rates issue – 15 across region, split to species (NE) and river – (EA), aware of 8 in our region alone. Not necessarily that not good quality, not enough quality from region as a whole – don't get knocked back if unsuccessful, apply again next year. Re pilots, probably want least line of resistance – pick area with good engagement with farmers and landowners or will be major uphill battle for next 2 years.

RM – SLLP area project last 3 or 4 years, Defra test and trial – engage farmers with interventions, NFM, water quality, engage farmers together to produce large land holdings

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across continuous area to apply for pilot to do much more work on their land. Looking to work with other partners, YW, SCC.

NS – WT involved on national agri-forest test and trial with soil association and another with Silver on woodland planning tool but nothing in SY. Support LB comments on where we can do large landscape recovery, like HH levels feels like potential area for something like this.

LB recommended AH speaks to RM about Test and Trial.

MW feels ELMS absolutely essential for agriculture as well as nature, sorry to see relegated to regional rather than landscape. Will be looking at HH levels but not now.

LB important we as LNP ensure SY applies for and receives funding to draw down and strategically target them.

LOR - Dearne, Humberhead seem like good options. But also think one interesting take would be having ELMS in a peri-urban area? Unconventional, but would be interesting to trial. One thing to remember is this is just the pilot - will be open for around 30 applications per year afterwards.

### **Actions:**

**PT** to share details with Trevor Mayne

## **7. SY LNP Woodland Creation update**

MN provided update on WC. This year 80ha finished, around 100k trees. Slight hit with grow back greener project. Forthcoming year private interest in around 110ha, not including LAs, will be whittled down. Having to prioritise anything flagged as issues for waders following due diligence info. To achieve planting require 250k, capacity fund 50k for each LA, return needs to be in with MCA by Friday 18 March. Will be able to produce full report on KPIs on SY project in April. MCA funding brought in additional 140k so significant funding. Working with Grow Back Greener with WT, landowners to decide what best fit with support MN can provide. Tree Fund Rotherham and Doncaster to find out whether successful, more people to work with in those LAs. Doncaster to be in following round re staff resource. By end 5th March our CTA bid will be 0.5m over next few years, to allow us 250ha target in SY planted up by us, long term WC plan, engage local people through new Senior PO to assist MN re private land, comms officer, tech and admin support is complicated re regulatory processes so that officer will work with MN on project pipeline, GIS support, community ranger on Catherine's team on all LAs priorities and support. Business plans for training centre and network in SY based around WC from officer level to school leavers, apprenticeships, tree nursery to produce trees in SY to reduce import and tie-in with LA objectives.

MW added is good local opportunity and happy to keep MN updated – MN ref One Forest, Yorks Arboretum Leeds. MW has links with Leeds, will follow up.

LB re: WC, currently talking about how much tree cover for SY? Need to use mapping to establish how much land is important for other things. 10.4% in SY, govt target is 12% - where do we want to be on that? Question for LNRS.

CN – canopy cover, following MN and Angus H – CN working on tree planting strategy once trees in ground, cllrs etc important, slight allergy to trees in politics but spoke to Eugene Walker and Terry Fox and is more appetite for what doing around trees, over 21% canopy cover in Sheffield but still needs to be a plan, re new developments, nature networks – useful to see this discussion today. Blue sky, nature remit, just start of conversation, looking at scope of street trees.

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MN asked to be kept in loop, i-Tree useful tool, potential for links to other LAs.

LOR - We've started developing a small montane tree nursery at Wild Ingleborough as well. Scale wise it's much smaller, but for specialist species.

AH – good meeting with Eastern Moors, PDNPA on WC looking at cross boundary for willow tit, scrub corridor Barnsley across to Manchester across peak, targeted stock creation.

MN asked to be kept updated with that too.

**Actions:**

**MW** to follow up with MN re: One Forest, Yorks Arboretum Leeds

**CN** to keep MN updated on SCC tree planting strategy

**Angus H** to keep MN updated on Eastern Moors/PDNPA cross boundary WC plans

**8. AOB**

LB – planning online hustings for mayoral candidates 25th April - will share info to LNP board, forward on to any networks

Paula T - Trevor Mayne retiring at end March 2022, recruiting Katie Lawrence and Claire Morris as ecologists

**Actions:**

**IC** to share next meeting date.

**Future agenda items:**

Alex Forrest presentation

Metrics – Pete Tomlin, Rich Sulley/Laurie Heykoop

LNP WC funding

Connected by Water – Jenny Longley

Partner Updates

Workshop planning

**Date of next meeting:**

Doodle Poll of potential dates to be circulated by Lynn Campbell at SRWT.