

Meeting Minutes			
Meeting	1st executive group meeting 2017		
Date & time	26th January 2017		
Venue	Durham Wildlife Trust, Rainton Meadows		
Chairman Vice Chairmen	Frank Major Geoff Hughes & Mike Pratt		
Actions	Please find summary at the end of the document		Actions complete
Attendees	Frank Major - Chairman	Dan Hattle – Sunderland Council	
	Neil Wilkinson – Gateshead Council	Paul Black – Riverfoss	Philip Baker – Banks Group
	Clare Steward – Environment Agency	Steve Bhowmick - DCC	Claire Thompson - NELNP
Apologies	Amanda Miller - RSPB	Jude Leitch – Northumberland Tourism	Mark Ketley – Northumberland Council
	Geoff Hughes – Durham LAF	Mike Pratt – Northumberland WT	Andy Smith – Intimation
	Stuart Timmiss - DDC	David Feige – Northumberland Council	Kate Culverhouse – Groundwork NE
	Jim Cokill – Durham WT	Helen Ryde - NELNP	
Agenda item 1: Welcome and introductions (FM)			
FM: Welcomed all executive members and commenced introductions.			
Agenda item 2: Previous meeting minutes and matters arising from extra meeting 30th Nov 2016 (CT)			
Summary of matters arising 30/11/16 CT: Follow up on funding agreements. CT: Set up iiE working group CS: Defra fund LNP in some way and explanation as to why will support catchment partnerships but not LNPs. ALL: Give consideration to membership fee to discuss at next meeting. CT & PBk: List of potential organisations to approach CT: Email out meeting dates by early Jan 2017		Done Done Done – CS will respond in item 3 Done and at this stage we have decided not to pursue as Partnership has further development to do Done and to share with executive via iiE update business plan by April 2017 Done and in item 8 for further review	
Item 3: Financial update (FM)			

<p>FM: Appreciate the work the executive is doing to secure transition funding to allow the Nature Partnership to deliver the business plan as agreed and look forward to receiving updates in due course.</p> <p>CT: Reviewed figures and forecasted income from partners and projects and agreed invoicing for April 2017 by March 2017.</p> <p>FM: I am pleased with the response, please support CT and HR to ensure invoices are processed in time. Can I now turn to support from Defra as we are a creation of their White Paper and if our council colleagues contribute it seems reasonable they do to?</p> <p>CS: WFD funding is set aside by the EA to support Catchment Partnerships there is no facilitation fund for LNPs. They don't consider LNPs to be their initiative.</p> <p>FM: They are the initiative of Defra and if we expect our LA colleagues to contribute it is not unreasonable to expect EA and NE to do the same.</p> <p>CT: I think part of the issue is that the language used by Defra describing both LNPs and Catchment Partnerships is similar and suggest that both are to become financial sustainable in their own right with support to achieve this being focused on CPs. The executive would welcome some commitment to deliver our plans to become sustainable or for project opportunities to be identified/ discussed to support this (Health related funding from EA & NE in 2015/16 yr).</p> <p>CS: I understand how it is perceived and will raise this again.</p> <p>FM: More information on project based support would be welcomed can CS look into this and report back?</p> <p>Also a good time to discuss Defra representation at meetings is the current process working or do we need to rotate attendance for each meeting so we receive a quarterly update from each?</p> <p>CT: The current representation relates to the merger and governance changes in 2015, obviously this can be changed if needed.</p> <p>CS: Defra meet quarterly and I provide an update on Nature Partnership plans. I can raise the rotating representation with them. We also have a new Area Manager (Oliver Harmer) and I will propose he comes to the next executive meeting.</p> <p>FM: I will leave Defra discussions with CS and ask you to report back at the next meeting. It would be good to meet with Oliver at our next meeting and will you please minute that we wish Graeme Warren well and thank him for his support over the years.</p> <p>Action</p> <p>CS: Defra attendance and support for 2017</p>	
<p>Item 4: NELNP transition work</p>	
<p>a) Investors in the Environment (iiE)</p> <p>Executive shown iiE promotional video.</p> <p>FM: Good overview can we have a bit more on detail.</p> <p>PB: National accreditation scheme, the Nature Partnership will be regional brand holders and manage all accounts in our area. iiE will provide operational training and support, there is a £3.5k brand license fee. Developing a target list with CT and will focus initial efforts here, Quorum Business Park is already signed up and we have interest from Peterlee Town Council also. There is a financial saving for businesses that sign up (ave £8,000).</p> <p>FM: Can I have your thoughts from a commercial stand point, what are the immediate and wider benefits and different versus existing systems.</p> <p>PBI: Staff engagement, continuous improvement and more financially viable than Carbon Trust and ISO although not exactly the same.</p> <p>NW & DH: How do we as NEENP execs support this work in our organisations?</p>	

<p>CT: Work with procurement teams as means of managing environmental impact in the supply chain. This would also help more SMEs and local businesses demonstrate the environmental credentials and potentially allow them to tender for more local contracts. See the value in councils signing up to iiE and leading by example.</p> <p>FM: To progress we each need to identify organisations in sectors we are familiar with that might benefit from iiE.</p> <p>PBI: Yes, we need to target the following positions 1) Energy/ enviro 2) CSR & sustainability 3) Accounts director</p>	
<p>ACTIONS: All: Identify target companies and contacts for iiE CT: Amend business plan and develop iiE action plan</p>	
<p>b) Capability Foundation</p>	
<p>PBI: The aim of the foundation is to create a multimillion pound fund over the next 15-20 years to be used by future generations to support, protect and enhance the environment of the North East in a way which will make everyone happy, healthier and wealthier.</p> <p>CT: Work is continuing with progressing paperwork for Charities Commission, 1 more trustee is required and then we can submit.</p> <p>FM: Continue with this and provide an update doc on governance arrangements for NP and Foundation.</p> <p>ACTIONS CT: Update governance arrangements PBI & CT: CC paperwork</p>	
<p>c) Operations and strategy – HR to deliver but CT covered</p>	
<p>CT: This is an outstanding action, will the board confirm the name change from North East Local Nature Partnership to North East England Nature Partnership and selected a logo accordingly.</p> <p>ALL: Agreed and done – image 1</p> <p>CT: With various executive members we are developing an environmental growth strategy. This will set the ambition for the North East environment for the next 5 years, it will be challenging and a 'live' document and is to be viewed in a similar way to the SEP. This strategy/ vision will be a 2 page document, not prescriptive but give focus to delivery activities of the environment sector. It will be finalised at the next executive meeting and open for comment from the forum onwards. Should we need to elaborate beyond 2 pages then we can but the delivery aspects is for partners, the NP will have an action plan to support the delivery of the strategy but to ensure it is a document that is used and referred to we want to keep it brief and high level strategic document. It should also support partners in their daily roles as the NEENP has a mandate from government to deliver an environmental strategy. We also plan to include targets for habitat improvement but this is currently a separate piece of work.</p> <p>ALL: Agreed and it is something that is needed.</p> <p>PB: It is important that we have a document of this sort and for it to be concise, strategic, work at a landscape scale, focus on where we are different/ add value and improve networks (ecological, communities and business).</p> <p>CT: We need to review executive group membership we have had some very active partners and others not so, only 1 or 2 and given the workload for 2017 we need to be nimble and quick in gaining consensus to make decisions. Some thought will be given to making the NP executive group smaller and devolving responsibility for sharing updates with sector colleagues, this will reduce the time placed on some partners. Need to use technology more for meetings, e.g. Google</p>	

<p>hangout. Please consider this and share your thoughts with me over the next couple of months as this will need to be finalised at the next meeting in April.</p> <p>FM: I must make a plea to the executive to support HR & CT in this work, as their work load is significant and we must use of influence to lend support as needed.</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <p>CT & HR: Work with executive to develop environmental growth strategy.</p> <p>HR: Governance arrangements and executive representation moving forward.</p>	
<p>Item 5: Conference</p>	
<p>CT: The invitation included in the papers summarises the plans and our progress for the NEENP conference. As requested by the executive previously it is planned to be a significant meeting to show the start of the journey of the NEENP and our plans to develop the foundation. We have speakers who will give an update on their sector and link to the environment in their presentation or in the question and answer sessions. The pitch of the conference is a challenge as the audience will represent both strategic and delivery interests and we have tried to cover this in the agenda, for future meetings we will likely have a key note speaker and environment speaker and then break into our themes but for this event we are giving a flavour of all of the conversations we have and sectors we work with.</p> <p>Various: Agenda looks great and impressed with the speakers we have.</p> <p>CT: Ask of the executive is to support this conference by being in attendance and sharing the invitation with your networks.</p> <p>FM: How many do we have signed up?</p> <p>CT: Approx 60, not including executive and we still have a month to go, capacity is 100.</p> <p>ALL: This is encouraging.</p> <p>FM: Ask of the executive to support this significant event in every way that has been requested.</p>	
<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>CT: Continue to recruit attendees</p> <p>ALL: Share invitations with your wider networks</p>	
<p>Item 6: Landscape partnership update</p>	
<p>FM: Although this update is important given the lengthy discussions we've had and to remain on schedule can I ask for a slide to be sent out with landscape partnership updates from the relevant executives.</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <p>CT: Share template with the minutes for executive to update for next meeting</p> <p>JC/ MP/ KC/ CS: Provide updates for the next executive meeting</p>	
<p>Item 7: AOB</p>	
<p>a) Environment Design Review (EDR) – Claire Thompson sub for Mark Ketley</p> <p>Included in the papers is a draft proposal for EDR created by MK based on BFL12 and our Nature Partnership themes, how do you want to build on this? This will be used for IAMP and similar developments.</p> <p>JC: More on ecosystems and connectivity</p> <p>PB: Can build in natural capital opportunities, needs some fine tuning to deliver the 'extra' this process can. I will share internally for comments.</p> <p>JC: Can we add a timeline to the process/ guidance on to what will happen on the day and share potential panel members? Will it fit with IAMP timeline, depends on the level of data available, possibly but at the moment there isn't a lot of info to share so perhaps at</p>	

<p>the next phase. IAMP has been a tricky one but we are wiser for future opportunities and have been able to refine our approach so nothing has been lost. Support for our involvement/ to perform an EDR is critical to our success and this message must be shared in local authorities.</p> <p>FM: Once again, please share your thoughts with CT & HR to be incorporate in the final document. When can this be expected by?</p> <p>CT: March/ April depending on resource available</p> <p>FM: What about the former Vaux site, this seems ideal for EDR, can DH find out more?</p> <p>DH: I will and look into a Seaburn and Chapel Garth sites.</p>	
<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>CT: Incorporate EDR suggestions and share updated by end of April</p> <p>DH: EDR on Vaux site</p>	
<p>b) Strategic Economic Plan update – Claire Thompson</p> <p>The SEP produced by the NELEP is being refreshed, the Nature Partnership has contributed to this process and there is a sense of place narrative in the refreshed version and hooks for developing land based natural assets. The launch event is expected in March 2017 and I will share the invitation with the executive.</p>	
<p>c) MEP Paul Brannen – Claire Thompson</p> <p>Paul will be joining us at our conference as a key note speaker. He is also keen to meet with the executive and I am currently arranging a date, this will be an opportunity to link his forest and woodland ambitions with the NEENP and intentions of the Capability Foundation.</p>	
<p>d) Gateshead Quays – Neil Wilkinson</p> <p>This area covers from the Baltic – Sage – Staiths and is a major development area, went to the market 2 years ago with a developer management plan, developed the first phase across the pedestrian bridge. There is confidence in the sector but it needs public money to make it work. There’s infrastructure challenges and want to see progress as it feels this is a crest of a wave. Gateshead and Newcastle in future cities programme, this is collaboration between local authorities, universities and business. Newcastle Uni is leading with Northumbria, a change to tap into the resources of academia. E.g. Apps – Car parking.</p> <p>Gateshead Riverside Park</p> <p>Considering an £5million HLF - private sector and local authorities. The aim is to create circular walks, linking routes and telling a story. This fits with the NEENP HLF landscapes projects upstream. It is a great example of outreach and collaborative work. Good to have the NEENP involved in development of this project.</p>	
<p>e) Defra funding – Clare Steward</p> <p>FM: I think we addressed this in earlier discussions and look forward to an update from Clare in due course.</p>	
<p>f) Balloon release – Claire Thompson sub for Helen Ryder</p> <p>Apologies for a brief overview in Helen’s absence, she has more knowledge about the history of this topic. It seems there is a place for the NEENP to lead/ facilitate the development of a balloon release pledge to be adopted by all councils in the region. It would be sensible for this to be part of a wider North East Litter Free campaign but I’ll get back to you about this idea for the next meeting. This has been raised by the Durham Heritage Coast (DHC) group and Niall Benson has offered to support us in this process – writing policy/ pledge etc. It is mainly about raising awareness with the public and for</p>	

<p>local authorities to discourage balloon releases on their land and in general as a result of bird and marine life deaths relating to the debris.</p> <p>SB: My understanding is that a pledged created several years ago and was to be adopted by local authorities, some progress but for various reasons stalled.</p> <p>SB: I think we need to be careful with how we present this as could be seen as kill joys.</p> <p>NW: I agree, presentation is key to get member buy in although I see value in this piece of work. We need to present an alternative to balloon releases.</p> <p>DH: Enforcing can become difficult as there isn't always going to be someone there to do this but the idea is fine and promoting the intention is good.</p> <p>CT: Yes and we will, at this stage I am asking if the executive is happy for the NEENP to support this work and perhaps within a wider context of North East Litter free and? We could work with the Woodland Trust to promote the planting of remembrance trees and so on.</p> <p>PBI: The nature partnership could run a competition to suggest alternatives, perhaps with corporate sponsorship and endorsement from others?</p> <p>ALL: A good idea to run a competition as it feels like a less formal way of promoting this message and encouraging behaviour change.</p> <p>FM: Will HR work on this for the next meeting.</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>CT: Share link to SEP launch event</p> <p>NW/ CT: Keep executive informed about the Gateshead Riverside Park project as part of HLF landscape partnership updates.</p> <p>HR: Balloon release and bigger North East Litter Free campaign</p>	
<p>Item 8: Next meeting and close (FM)</p>	
<p>FM: Thank you for your attendance and valuable contributions. The NEENP is certainly on a good footing strategically and I look forward to the support of our partners to allow us to deliver. The next meeting is Thursday April 27th, 2pm, venue to be confirmed. Papers and minutes will be available via the member's area.</p>	
<p>SUMMARY OF ACTIONS</p> <p>CS: Defra attendance and support for 2017</p> <p>All: Identify target companies and contacts for iiE</p> <p>CT: Amend business plan and develop iiE action plan</p> <p>CT: Update governance arrangements</p> <p>PBI & CT: Charities Commission paperwork</p> <p>CT & HR: Work with executive to develop environmental growth strategy.</p> <p>HR: Governance arrangements and executive representation moving forward.</p> <p>CT: Continue to recruit attendees for conference</p> <p>ALL: Share invitations with your wider networks</p> <p>CT: Share template with the minutes for executive to update for next meeting</p> <p>JC/ MP/ KC/ CS: Provide HLF Landscape Partnership updates for the next executive meeting</p> <p>CT: Incorporate EDR suggestions and share updated by end of April</p> <p>DH: To investigate the feasibility of an EDR on the Vaux site</p> <p>CT: Share link to SEP launch event</p> <p>NW/ CT: Keep executive informed about the Gateshead Riverside Park project as part of HLF landscape partnership updates.</p> <p>HR: Balloon release and bigger North East Litter Free campaign</p>	