

**North East Local Nature Partnership
2020: 3rd executive meeting**

Date 30th January 2020 **Start time** 15.00 **Finish time** 17.00

Location Quayside, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 2BH

Attendees

Paul Brannen, NEENP, Chair	David Feige, Northumberland County Council	Jim Cokill, Durham Wildlife Trust
Ian Brown, Forestry Commission	Cris Brown, Northumberland Tourism	Andy Smith, Intimation
Clare Deasy, Northumbria Water Group	Michelle Mancini, Public Health England	Steve Bhowmick, Durham County Council
Claire Thompson, NEENP & CNE	Charles Sellers, Innovation and technology Group	Neil Wilkinson, Gateshead Council

Apologies/ Currently tentative

Donna Robinson rep Environment Agency	Natural England, Steph Bird-Halton	Dan Hattle, Sunderland City Council
Mike Pratt, Northumberland Wildlife Trust	Alistair Scott, Northumbria University	

Agenda

Item	Description	Papers	Owner	Time
1	Welcome and introductions Staff rotations at Defra, Chair has contacted for confirmation of attendance going forward. Invite Catherine Saxon, Area Director for the North East	No	Paul Brannen	5 mins
2	Previous minutes and matters arising No matters arising and approved	Yes	Paul Brannen	
3	VONNE initiative update – Verbal and develop 1. Current position What should the NEENP should be asking for and leading on for this climate crisis project? The executive asked to give consideration to this throughout this agenda item. Two coalition documents were shared before the New Year, the 6 Month Progress Report is the most current project document. The emerging coalition is now being referred to as the North East Climate Coalition (NEECC), with the strap line being, 'Making the North East England's Greenest Region'. There is not a project name as it is yet to be decided. Getting close to the point where there is enough of a critical mass to take decisions to deliver project ambitions of tackling climate change, addressing the ecological emergency and the climate crisis. Have good engagement for business, health, farming representatives, NGOs, education and so on, waiting for sign off on councils. Attended ANEC meeting in January 2020 but they didn't			

think they were appropriate body to sign off need to go back to various authorities. Funding for VONNE £60,000 from the Integrated Care Service if all 12 councils also make contributions, which would give a good operating and development fund. The NECC made it to the last 40 of the National Lottery Climate Fund, they now have to answer more questions and then might be offered a chance to enter into the final 15, for £2.5 million over 5 years. If successful, this would fund VONNE and civil society to make contribution to the NECC. Should the National Lottery Climate Fund be unsuccessful then funding will have to be found from another source.

Regular attenders from the NEENP include Claire Thompson, Jim Cokill and Mike Pratt with Claire leading on Indicators work with Jim supporting by leading the natural capital indicators group.

The region has been suggested as a pilot region, a meeting is planned with the Cabinet Office about what the North East might be able to offer up. Chimes with Lord Debdon's land use report so can the North East be a pilot for some of this work such as 10% of land for agroforestry.

Also, a meeting with Lord Shipley suggesting the role of the North East as a natural capital and land use change pilot.

There are no other examples of regional, community sector led climate initiatives know at the moment. The NEECC potentially also fits with the changing political landscapes of the North East. Sir Paul Ennals and Paul Brannen meeting with Guy Opperman MP and Richard Wearmouth, Economic Portfolio and Chair of Northumberland Council to discuss specific North East opportunities.

First meeting of the new strategic board will be in March with a launch in April. As the agenda falls from meetings, will keep the executive informed and will take decisions as needed.

Executive agreed to support the idea of the North East being a piloting for natural capital related activities.

2. NEENP contribution and offer

Need to balance the environment sector and what is technologically possible. Carbon Capture and Storage is not our area but natural carbon sequestration and storage and keeping the ecological emergency at the fore are the roles of the NEENP.

Forming a hub and getting the complex ideas across quickly, what do communities want the landscape to look like and that the ecosystem and natural capital benefits are aware and understand. This is to be a just transition and includes farmers we therefore to collaborate more with the NFU so we support them in their just transition. A full strategy or plan for landscape management is needed, which is the role of the NEENP as it is cross boundary and cross sector work. Seems a knowledge transfer role for the NEENP exists, might sit with some LEP funding and give us the opportunity to become a valued partner. Must avoid being in competition with each other as has been the habit of the sector in the past.

Consider reverse engine the process and looking for low hanging fruit and will make a change in the next 5 years or so. What are the strengths of the NEENP and USP. We need to think how 'we' can represent the nature group.

Action

- Contact Mike Jeffries, freshwater CO2 sequestration – PB
- Investigate the Knowledge hub role and potential funding via LEP - CT

4

NEENP

1. HLF application

The application has two purposes, firstly to tell the story of our natural history, set against the timeline of the region's social and economic events and to ready the NEENP (Vision, business planning and structure) to be able to fulfil its role in the NEECC. In detailing the evolution of our landscapes and the story of our natural heritage we'll be able to show as we see our landscapes now is certainly not how they started. This is vital given the level of land use change required to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis.

By using a mixture of research and sources we will illustrate through visuals and stories the

changing landscapes and the impact on nature and communities. The audience will be wide as we need contributions from the private, public, academic sectors and communities. Guidance will be needed on approach to managing the data, at this stage assumption is open source where possible.

Project will allow us to look at our audience development process, looking to learn from the work of the arts and culture sectors.

A lot of investment is being spent on archives and data storage, so times well with the work of councils. Thought needs to be given to linking with where appropriate the agendas of others, such as tourism.

Next stage is to submit an Expression of Interest, upon receiving a positive response for the Heritage Lottery we'll develop a project development team and timeline.

Executive agreed to the submission of the EIO and confirmed willingness to contribute and support development. Already undertaking data management in councils and so the project fits with machine readable ambition.

Actions

- Submit EOI to National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Develop project team upon receipt of positive response to EOI

2. Natural Capital event with Bright Water

As part of the Bright Water workstream and aligning with recent government announcements the NEENP has the opportunity to plan and deliver a natural capital event in partnership with the Bright Water project. Two opportunities for the NEENP exist, firstly to showcase what a Local Nature Partnership can do/ achieve with some support funding and secondly to convene landowners and farmers on the natural capital agenda, groups we've struggled to engage in the past.

Plan is for keynote speakers on the natural capital approach (payment for public goods, indicators, plans etc) followed by a series of workshop groups to identify the knowledge level and support need for those that will be operating in a natural capital world. The NEENP will produce a report detailing the case for investing in this area.

Executive is keen for the NEENP to lead the just transition element of the climate agenda in this area. It is very relevant to farmers, landowners such as the Church Commissioners as they are going to have to manage their land quite differently so how they have in the past. The NEENP should seek to identify its niche in this area, how can it support tenant farmers?

Perhaps consider 2 events. One event that welcomes all and has speakers on natural capital, health and development and planning. Then more rural based event for landowners and farmers.

Note the George Clark review.

Executive gave support to continuing with this work

Action

- Send out a hold the date and agenda by week 2 of February 2020 – HR/ CT

3. Defra policies - Agreeing a way forward and role of NEENP

As the paper listing the key Defra announcements shows there is a lot going on in the environment sector and its relationship to other sectors and policies. In summary the announcements include:

- a. 25 Year Environment Plan
- b. Environment Bill
- c. Agriculture Bill
- d. Nature Recovery Networks
- e. Tree Strategy
- f. Biodiversity net gain
- g. Natural capital approach
- h. River basin planning 2021

The Forestry Commission is still an overarching organisation but has become devolved. State

	<p>owned forests are making profits and the FC are now focusing on mixed use forests. The FC is focusing on how they can help local authorities, seems sensible that locally they involve the NEENP, so we are all informed and working collaboratively. There is a shift towards hectares of trees rather than number of trees. Tree Champion, William Wordsly has led on the strategy. Interestingly trees are considered to only be 10% of the carbon solution that said it is about looking at the value in 20, 30, 50 and 100 years time. The value of tree is more than carbon sequestration and includes carbon storage, materials, ecological and ecosystem value, regulating water fluxes and the like.</p> <p>Developing documents and associated advice is what the NEENP should be doing to assist understanding and implementation approaches across the region. Clearly a role for aligning this work together and making it coherent for stakeholders. For example, net gain strategy has to provide developers with a guide on when and where they use the net gain metric and where can't use on their land. Viability might cause it to flounder however net gain is priority legislation requirement and this might swing it.</p> <p>Executive agreed the NEENP needs to explore and develop a plan to fulfil its role of knowledge sharing on environmental strategy, policy, practice and informal guidance from a neutral stance. Similar approach to the LEP</p> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a task and finish group to meet in February. Agree terms of reference for the group. Provisional aims are for the group to collate and share policy area announcement, timelines, interpret locally and make submission to Agriculture Bill – IB - Task and finish group to being NEENP business plan drafting - SB
6	<p>Capability North East update</p> <p>1. Finances</p> <p>Overall positive trend for CNE's finances. Some significant new contracts from public and private sector. Have applied to the REACH fund for a grant to refresh business plan, develop more sophisticate financial reporting system and dashboard. Upon completion of this work we will apply for green investment (mixed grant and loan) to enable business development activities. Including rebranding GENE, website updates, marketing and communications strategy and implementation, grow associates model and 1 FTE to support this work and allow CT to move to focus on oversight and business development. Anticipate application going to investment committee on March 18th with announcement the following week. Executive noted thanks to CT.</p> <p>2. iiE update</p> <p>Capability North East works with public, private and third sector organisations to guide them in reducing their environmental impact and emissions in response to the climate emergency. To do this we use the Investors in the Environment system to facilitate the development of Environmental Management Systems (EMS)/ plans to integrate sustainability into the organisation and enable behaviour change and engagement throughout the organisation. Sustainability is really about operational excellence. Presentation on the iiE process then followed. For further information or copies of the slides contact CT. CT noted thanks to executive that have supported this work, notably DCC, Gateshead, Intimation and DWT.</p> <p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NEENP executives to make warm introductions to 3 from networks and forward to CT by next meeting in June.
6	<p>AOB</p> <p>1. Water environment research representation – George Gerring has been heavily involved in the Water Hub request for him to join the partnership as has expertise in cross cutting themes of nature, water, business and technology. Need to confirm which organisation he will represent and if it is the Water Hub, in principle his appointment is agreed. CS</p>

	<p>2. Regional climate change item – Durham County Council is in touch with Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT) running regional workshops and adapting climate change. Knowledge based organisations, pushed towards R&D and how to implement effectively. Suggest NEENP engages with ADEPT in region.</p> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - George Gerring to join NEENP executive – CT - ADEPT contact - SB
7	<p>Next meeting and close 25th June 2019 – 2-4pm – venue Gateshead Council to host, venue tbc.</p>

Actions summary

To be updated for next meeting in June

1. Invite Catherine Saxon to next NEENP meeting - PB
2. Contact Mike Jeffries, freshwater CO2 sequestration - PB
3. Submit EOI to National Lottery Heritage Fund – HR/ CT
4. Develop project team upon receipt of positive response to EOI - HR
5. Send out a hold the date and agenda for natural capital event by week 2 of February 2020 – HR/ CT
6. Create a Defra announcements task and finish group to meet in February. Agree terms of reference for the group. Provisional aims are for the group to collate and share policy area announcement, timelines, interpret locally and make submission to Agriculture Bill – IB
7. Task and finish group to being NEENP business plan drafting - SB
8. **NEENP executives to make warm introductions to 3 from networks and forward to CT by next meeting in June - ALL**
9. George Gerring to join NEENP executive – CT
10. ADEPT contact - SB