



County Durham Environment Partnership Board Minutes

Wednesday, 27th March 2018
The Lantern Room, Town Hall, Durham

Attendees:

Oliver Sherratt (Chair) (OS)	-	Direct Services, DCC
Liz Charles (LC)	-	Durham Community Action
Vicky Burrell (VB)	-	Strategic Waste, DCC
Lyndsey Waters (LW)	-	Communications, DCC
Steve Bhowmick (SB)	-	Chair, Coastal, Heritage and Landscapes Group
Matthew Bateman (MB)	-	Communications, DCC
Claire Thompson (CT)	-	NEENP
Pauline Walker (PW)	-	Durham County Council
Peter Samson (PS)	-	DCA/Food Durham County Council
Katharine Birdsall (KB)	-	Environment Agency
John Reed (JR)	-	Chair, Climate Change Group
Gordon Elliott (GE)	-	Partnerships, DCC
Glenn Robinson (GR)	-	Partnerships Team, DCC
Angela Brown (Minutes) (AB)	-	Secretariat, Partnerships, DCC

Item No.	Subject	Action By	
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>OS welcomed everyone to the meeting and initiated round table introductions.</p>		
2.	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising</p> <p>All actions were agreed as a true and accurate record of the last meeting.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>The database for Durham Insight – an email was circulated but only had 3 responses back. OS reminded the Board that at the meeting before last there was an option available to put Environment information onto Durham Insights database. This adds to public awareness and they can then access the data. GR will resend link</p>	GR	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government have developed a YoGA toolkit <p>Questions/Comments</p> <p>KB gave an example of work the Environment Agency do. They offer their staff 2 environmental days, where staff go out and do some environmental voluntary work and they are given a choice of what they would like to do. Only 10% of these days are taken up by people. She asked partners to give examples of work that they would like help with. These could be put into a database - with the idea of having a matching service which could flag up organisations around the table that may have things people could help with. LC mentioned that DCA are now part of the sub group for this and will promote through Abby Thompson.</p> <p>OS mentioned that there could be pitfalls of having just a year as projects may run into 2020. CT mentioned that this will act as a platform with the intention to run it again next year. Its Defra's way of gauging interest and to see exactly what people would like. OS felt it was relatively easy to brand and promote it. However, this year we are promoting year of culture, which may restrict the opportunities to promote YoGA. Hopefully, if it leads to good practice, it will generate more activity on the ground.</p> <p>PW informed the Board that her team is doing research into developing a volunteering scheme and are currently working on a code of conduct for businesses, to see if they wish to be involved. PW will circulate to OS over the next 2-3 weeks</p>	PW	
4.	<p>Environment Awards 30th Anniversary</p> <p>SB mentioned that most people will be aware that it is 30th Anniversary for the Environment Awards. The launch will coincide with World Environment Day on 5th June, there will be a storyboard exhibition which will be touring the county and they will be encouraging projects to come forward.</p> <p>The ceremony will be in October and they are looking at a format based on 2 pathways</p>		

	<p>category winners for 2019 and an additional element which will look at all projects over the last 30 years and give a personal recognition award for work over those 30 years. They are working on budget now and doing internal work to get money ring-fenced and they are also trying to identify sponsors.</p> <p>PW informed the Board that they initially narrowed it down to 5 venues but are now down to 2. The Radisson which is a nice venue, if we held it there how could we make it different to other years and it only holds 200 people comfortably. Hardwick Hall hotel is the other option. The Hotel has been revamped and parking is great. Hardwick Park have won awards and have a green flag park. They would offer reduced rate for anyone staying there. Hardwick capacity is 380. We could encourage people to car share if this venue is chosen.</p> <p>The cost is £200 more at Hardwick Hall but the Radisson can't hold same amount, therefore we are steering towards Hardwick. Transport and accessibility are potentially an issue.</p> <p>Sponsorship is on target, looking at £20,000 to cover everything, and they have £11,000 already. OS mentioned that it would be good to weave in some APP projects.</p> <p>The date they are looking at is 23rd October</p>		
<p>5.</p>	<p>Single Use Plastics Charter</p> <p>Since the last meeting a report went to Cabinet relating to use of Single Use Plastic (SUP) and an action plan was put in place to reduce it. Part of the plan was to develop a pledge to make further steps – key partners endorsed this.</p> <p>The pledge has been developed and partners came together to sign the pledge to reduce SUP following CDP meeting on 14th March. As a way forward for the group we want to encourage more partners to sign the SUP Pledge and disseminate through their networks. This aim will be to increase the numbers signed up to the pledge from the 14 current partners. VB will be arranging a meeting very soon to take this forward. We have already had interest from town and parish councils and potentially</p>		

	AAPs. We would also like to encourage schools to get involved.		
6.	<p>Strategic Actions</p> <p>Comments in relation to the following High Level Actions –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a suite of environmental training and volunteering opportunities – Abby at DCA is leading on various ideas of how this can be taken forward. It also links into the work PW is doing. • Expand existing leaf composting project trial into 3-4 new areas – some work was done on this last year. Leaves are a problem on pavements, gardeners find them to be a valuable resource maybe it would be useful to have collection points. • Coordinated a countywide insect friendly pollinator project – we want people to become more aware of this. Would like to build up bigger resource especially for food production. Stuart from DCC Ecology team is involved with a bee pollinate project which is being developed on a regional basis. • Develop and promote e-learning awareness course for littering offenders – the Council are developing an online e-learning course for people caught littering in the county. • Publish Natural Capital Strategy for County Durham – setup a cross-sector working group to deliver this – partners to help in evaluating biodiversity and improve upon it – Defra’s 25-year plan has set the profile for the County to work regionally and locally to deliver biodiversity. • Focus on supporting existing and pipeline landscape scale partnerships; Seascapes and Durham Woodland Revival, through collective networks, knowledge sharing and identifying potential joint funding opportunities. Seek engagement of new lottery programme; National Lottery Heritage Fund – want to look at further funding opportunities coming through the new lottery agenda and need to engage and work in partnership • Promote Catchment Based Approach (CaBa) with NWL, EA and Wear Rivers 		

Trust to expand reach of water environment funding and projects, including delivery of Topsoil project with the Wears Rivers Trust – the water group are keen to promote wider catchment around water – the EA are working in partnership to look at water table/quality and wider amenities value around catchments – KB mentioned that in relation to the River Trusts timescales should be ongoing. The leads for this action should be EA, Wear Trust and Water Agency.

- Pursuing projects to utilise the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding allocated to County Durham – There is still £16m available for Durham
- Investing opportunities with partners to use heat from mine water – mine water in County Durham is a legacy from the coalmines. The Coal Authority are looking at opportunities to use ground water to heat the Stanley Louisa Centre
- Developing Solar Photovoltaic Arrays farm at Tanfield Lea – constantly looking at other opportunities and have tenders in for project at Tanfield Lea
- Retrofitting Council buildings with energy efficient LED lights – OS felt we need to broaden this as it could be linked to financial savings.
- Coordinated local recording of built heritage – supporting engagement of communities in identifying local (non-designated) heritage assets through current initiatives/programmes e.g. Seascapes and wider DCC-led recording, working with Historic England on relevant partnership projects
- Promote activities at the County's two Heritage Action Zones (HAZs); Bishop Auckland Town Centre and Stockton & Darlington Railway. Regarding the legacy and sustainability of projects – there are no additional resource for these actions.

OS concluded that from the list there was a number of things identified going forward. This provides us with a focus. GR will refine this from the comments.

GR

	CT mentioned she would like to have regular updates with the Partnership to build on the plan	CT	
7.	<p>Updates from Group Chairs</p> <p><u>Coastal, Heritage & Landscape Group</u></p> <p>SB – The group last met on 7th March, had discussion with Clare Deesy from Northumbrian Water regarding commitments on funding scheme. Allocated £500,000 to work with partners on biodiversity, looking at other parameters asking for tie ups on work. Improve 300km across 9 catchments.</p> <p>Heard from Paul Black in relation to the Brightwater Programme funding for River Skerne; it is now onto the delivery phase and there will be launch for Brightwater Programme big open weekend which will involve lots of public engagement.</p> <p>The Wildflower Meadows Project has been a success and is now moving into new phase of Green Infrastructures. They are looking at a review to utilise wider assets.</p> <p>Seascape Project – this is big scale from Tyne to Tees. Will find out in August this year if been successful to extend this programme.</p> <p><u>Environment in Your Communities</u></p> <p>The Big Dig Day – to promote edible gardens and encourage people to volunteer will take place Saturday 27th April.</p> <p>Eat them to defeat them/vegpower & ITV – this is a new national advertising campaign that aims to inspire kids to eat more healthily and help tackle rising childhood obesity.</p> <p>Waste & Recycling have a new food waste challenge in March and April which will involve 10 families.</p> <p>Regarding the Resources and Waste Strategy for England 2018 - we have 4 current waste consultations.</p> <p>We met with Michelle Cooper from CDCF with the idea of setting up community growing, this</p>		

	<p>was a really good meeting however, we have not heard back from her since.</p> <p><u>Climate Change & Air Quality Group</u></p> <p>The group met earlier this week and actions were identified. In the media this week there has been coverage of poor air quality around schools. Want to do something appropriate in Durham possibly have a day of action for children to walk or cycle to school. Will be in touch with comms team to discuss national air quality day which is around 20th June.</p> <p>There have been number of updates including quite a few council projects e.g. Louisa Mine Water Project at Tanfield and the Council Light Project.</p> <p>There have been quite a few positive stories in the media recently including the Council adopting a pledge to reduce Carbon by 2050.</p> <p><u>Chair update</u></p> <p>OS mentioned that the SUP had already been covered. The CDP saw a presentation on the Year of Culture and are looking at ways of how the Environment could be weaved into this.</p> <p>The Council have agreed 2 targets - to reduced DCC emissions by 60% by 2030, and secondly to investigate how County Durham could be carbon neutral by 2050. This is a big issue for the partnership. Full Council want report within 6 months which has to outline the council's plans and an action plan.</p>		
<p>8.</p>	<p>Environment Partnership Communications</p> <p>LW circulated the draft newsletter and gave overview on the content. OS mentioned was great to see SUP on front cover. Could board members take this away and feed any comments back to LW or MB.</p> <p>Caring for Environment Awards have nominations for Chester-Le-Street so will contact these people and let them know.</p>	<p>ALL</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>GR mentioned he had had a discussion around the strategy and there are changes to come from SB sub group meeting – need to broaden</p>		

	<p>to cover water changes, these are highlighted in red. The Board endorsed this.</p> <p>PS said that County Durham Kitchen managers had won a LA sustainability award for a kitchen in Leadgate, which is a real accolade.</p> <p>SB reminded the Board that Earth Hour is 30th March. The Council would be honouring this on Friday 29th March from 3-4pm</p> <p>OS mentioned that there has been a mini restructure within the Council. Building Services have moved into Assets and Property and part of JR team has too. Head of Planning and Assets will be losing assets but gaining Housing and Economic Regeneration. SB Team and Ecology teams have come across to Environmental Service, Parks and Countryside now are also no longer in direct services they now come under Environmental Services.</p> <p>CT asked partners if they were aware of the project relating to climate change and children's voices. The panel are to meet with elected members to discuss the challenges. OS is meeting with portfolio holder tomorrow and will mention this.</p> <p>OS mentioned that this would be LC last meeting with the Environment Board. As a thank you for her time and dedication to the Environment Partnership she was awarded a Care for Environment Award.</p>		
<p>10.</p>	<p>Date and time of next meeting: 19th June, 2019, 10.00am, Town Hall, Durham</p>		