



**County Durham Environment Partnership Board  
Minutes**

**Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
The Lantern Room, Town Hall, Durham**

**Attendees:**

- |                              |   |   |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Oliver Sherratt (Chair) (OS) | - | Direct Services, DCC                          |
| Jim Cokill (JC)              | - | Durham Wildlife Trust                         |
| Steve Bhowmick (SB)          | - | Chair, Coastal, Heritage and Landscapes Group |
| Peter Samsom (PS)            | - | DCA – Food Durham                             |
| Kathryn Athey (KA)           | - | Partnerships, DCC                             |
| Lyndsey Waters (LW)          | - | Durham County Council                         |
| Lawry Cook (LC)              | - | Environment Agency                            |
| Gordon Elliott (GE)          | - | Partnerships, DCC                             |
| Vicky Burrell (VB)           | - | Strategic Waste, DCC                          |
| Angela Brown (Minutes) (AB)  | - | Secretariat, Partnerships, DCC                |

**Apologies**

- |                         |   |                              |
|-------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Corinne Walton (CW)     | - | Area Action Partnership, DCC |
| Katharine Birsdall (KB) | - | Environment Agency           |

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Action By</b>	
1.	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> OS welcomed everyone to the meeting and initiated round table introductions.		
2.	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b> All actions were agreed as a true record of the meeting.  Matters arising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page 3 – questionnaires were sent out</li> <li>• Environment Awards is on agenda for today</li> <li>• Portfolio to plant trees in every school in the county – easy wins not every schools have challenges</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban Tree Challenge – finished the first phase yesterday – mixed trees mostly large. Next season will be doing smaller trees also</li> </ul>		
3.	<p><b>Environment Awards 2020 Options</b></p> <p>SB updated the Board members. The paper was circulated in advance of this meeting so hopefully everyone has had the opportunity to look through the paper. Looking to pin down the event for this coming autumn. We want to ensure that this coming season is as successful as 2019 awards for 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We felt that the Venue was adequate for needs. The date that we have pencilled for this is 22<sup>nd</sup> October this year. The date is in the Chairman and leader’s diary and have provisionally booked venue. Comments that have been back are aligning the ceremony with the Strategic Partnership Event themed around Climate and the Environment. We are open to views to pull the Env Awards back into November.</p> <p>The following points were about the venue itself we felt Hardwick Hall is very good offers good service and has ample parking available, it offers value for money. Hardwick would definitely be preference for venue. Bishop Auckland Town Hall was suggested – this is accessible from town centre and has parking around it and could also use the Council Tech team so this would be possible fall back or an alternate</p> <p>It was suggested that innovation and new things coming forward should be given recognition in own right. Another option would be to incorporate innovation category into sustainability award as we should be looking at new ways to do things.</p> <p>The Youth Council – it was felt that it would be good to engage the Youth Ambassadors in the judging panel. We are asking for decision going forward and refer to the table on the back of the report.</p> <p>If we were to buy in Tech Support there would be an extra £2000 cost at Hardwick or Radisson, for Bishop Town Hall we would use our internal team so there would be no extra cost.</p> <p>SB concluded that last year was a big event. Have £1700 committed that will move forward and Authority has put in global figure of £5000 so now have £6700 in pot ready to go before sponsors come in and we have two or three big sponsors, so it looks healthy. I feel that given where we are the preference would be to hold the event at Hardwick. Could look at Bishop Auckland as a fall back.</p> <p>OS felt it would be useful for Gordon to update on his item before comments are made.</p>		
4.	<p><b>County Durham Partnership Environment Event</b></p> <p>GE discussed the County Durham Partnership Annual Event. This event replaced the Big Tent event. He mentioned that in previous years had invited Cormac Russel as guest speaker. Cllr Henig as Leader of the CDP will open the event. Last year the focus was Culture and</p>		

Arts with it been the year of culture. Had keynote presentations and workshops followed by food. Last year we held the event at Durham Cricket Ground and used our internal team, but we had to use Cricket Club equipment. We are looking this year to have a focus on Environment and the Climate Emergency Plan. It would be up to the service to come up with key suggestions for names/speakers and has been suggested the possibility of combining with Environment Awards. We could maybe help with budget as partnership has budget for event. Need thoughts and suggestions and ideas for keynote speakers:

OS split this into 3 sections:

- Do we want an Environment themed event?
- If yes do, we link to Environment Awards
- Where would you want the event to be held

PS felt that Environment never gets into the spotlight so it would be very beneficial and felt now is the time around the big agenda on carbon reductions – need to engage with wider community industries

JC mentioned that we need to be aware of links. Matt Baker maybe a good person for this. He felt sponsorship should be separate from the Environment Awards. Could have a few key speakers but would make dates harder. PS gave examples for possible workshops – households/small businesses/farming. He felt collectively we can push this as its is not just the responsibility of the Council.

OS said it was quite clear that we all have agreed that Environment would be great theme for the event. The next steps would be a group being pulled together and would be looking from support from yourselves going forward to make the links, there would be joint effort around the themes.

OS asked if would like this event to be linked to Environment Awards – Yes it might link to awards, the downside would be that it could be tiring by the time it comes to the end of the night.

SB felt that alignment and cohabitation is really excellent but we need to be clear about total cohabitation with the two events. We struggle every year to get everyone there as the capacity is very tight and this would be two specific audiences. It would be very challenging to co stage event in the same venue as this is two very different events so would have different audience of people.

It was suggested having the CDP Event the day after the night of the Environment Awards.

OS asked in relation to looking for speakers and checking for availability how soon do we need to book the venue? SB felt it needs to be decided in next 4-6 weeks as the venues fill up quickly, therefore we need direction today.

	<p>OS asked if the two events were linked the preference for venue would be Hardwick Hall where people could stay over with the events in one venue. But also moving venue could be a good idea also. SB felt that Bishop Auckland Town Hall is great, but it is Town Hall Civic Building tucked upon 1st floor above the library.</p> <p>Public transport needs to be accessible and we need to be offering it</p> <p>OS concluded that there was an agreement to have an Environment themed Event and GE will set up a group. There was also a suggestion to look at the Gala Theatre for the event. Hardwick Hall is the preference for Environment Awards.</p> <p>SB mentioned that he will take back to looking at Hardwick as a strong option and SB will liaise with GE in relation to dates for events. JC mentioned that he would like to be involved in group looking at initial ideas</p>	<p><b>GE</b></p> <p><b>SB</b></p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Sustainable Local Food Strategy</b></p> <p>PS gave a presentation on Sustainable Local Food Strategy and mentioned that they are looking to review this to try and engage more people and set new priorities that reflect the changing context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on climate change and the role of our food and diet</li> <li>• Concern about food waste</li> <li>• National food strategy development</li> <li>• Rising health inequalities</li> <li>• Policy changes</li> </ul> <p>Helping to deliver reductions in carbon emissions for the food system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban street tree replacements, including urban fruit trees</li> <li>• Green infrastructure, reduced mowing and urban rewilding</li> <li>• Maximising carbon storage in land (e.g. allotments)</li> <li>• Consider how soil conservation, soil regenerative farming and agro-ecology can be promoted with farmers and landowners</li> <li>• Increase the proportion of local food grown and sold in the county</li> <li>• Food waste and composting – behaviour change and collections</li> <li>• Sustainable procurement guidance on carbon reduction</li> </ul> <p>PS mentioned that he is working closely with VB team on waste reduction and public health team but mentioned that any board members we welcome to be part of this. He proposed to bring some responses together and put them in as actions for the new food strategy.</p>		

	<p>He will be meeting with Helen Grayshan from Carbon Projects to look at how can move things forward.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translate actions from Climate Emergency Response into Food Strategy</li> <li>• Discuss project development with Low Carbon Team</li> <li>• More conversations and consultations April – Jun</li> <li>• Aim to launch early Autumn 2020</li> </ul> <p>OS thanked PS</p> <p>Questions/Comments</p> <p>GE mentioned that in terms of development of the strategy a good route would be the County Durham Partnership as the County Council are really positive in making that happen. Possibility would be to present to HWB and CDEP Boards as would be keen for this to be taken through.</p> <p>SB also suggested that it could be a good breakout session for the event as it's a good community event. Supporting local economy by buying local.</p> <p>OS welcomed this potentially going to other thematic groups to raise awareness that its been developed</p> <p>PS will link with GE</p>	<p><b>PS</b></p> <p><b>PS &amp; GE</b></p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Climate Emergency Plan</b></p> <p>A full report went to Durham County Council Cabinet and received emergency response plan in early February as well as existing schemes. Financial arguments for energy efficiencies measures 13m and a pot of £50m that we are trying to access. Will support addition for £3m for schemes to push climate change work. The plan was a starter of what the Council can do and what measures can be done with partners to help fulfil wider ambitions</p> <p>The Council will use building on schemes as well as supporting renewables. Will build forward own work with fleet to turnover to electric vehicles. Overseeing the governance of that is the Carbon Board, all Councils will have their own internal groups also. Project Management will be aligned to it. It seems to be all working fine the bigger challenge is contributing to wider County Durham work. An idea of projects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 350,000 extra trees that will be planted</li> <li>• Supporting peatland restoration and heritage coast with kelp projects</li> <li>• Less developed supporting electric charging structure</li> <li>• Building further on the success with BEEP project</li> <li>• Community Investment Fund</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Colleagues to support homes to reduce energy consumption through heat pumps etc</li> </ul> <p>So, there is still a lot to be developed in plans. It is expected that this group will take on the broader partnership of Climate, to influence. This was recognised in the CDP Review so going forward this group will be seen as Environment &amp; Climate Change.</p> <p>OS mentioned that because of extra work in his core post he was signalling that this meeting will be his last meeting as Chair of the Environment Partnership, he took on the role 4 years ago as interim chair and always intended to step down when the timing was right to do so. After a discussion with JC it was agreed that Jim would take on the chairing role</p> <p>Questions/Comments</p> <p>GE thanked OS for chairing the meetings over the last four years praised him for the great job he had done. And suggested that it may be worth considering Alan Patrickson as a future rep for the meeting as Alan will start his new post on 1<sup>st</sup> April and will be leading on the Climate Change agenda.</p> <p>SB thanked OS for keeping the Environment Profile going.</p>		
7.	<p><b>Updates from Group Chairs</b></p> <p><u>Coastal, Heritage &amp; Landscape Group</u></p> <p>The next meeting will be held tomorrow.</p> <p>At the last meeting we talked about Landscape work that is going on Townscape Big project in Seaham Townscape for Heritage. 2m English Heritage, Coordinator Julie Anderson came to talk about this. Looking to start a heritage trail. Activity plans training around that physical fund to update features of shop fronts to give more profile.</p> <p>The Woodland Revival Project in Durham City is going to bring new project manager, Charles Foreman will be joining in mid-April and will be keen to work with the Board.</p> <p>Breaking news – given the success of 2.7m from Lottery for seascapes round 2 bids. Great reflection of hard work for Niall Benson team. Setting up new team to deliver this. 5 authorities involved from Tyne to Tees. Doing press release now. Some exciting work is expected and will update at a later date.</p> <p><u>Environment in Your Communities</u></p> <p>PS mentioned that they have struggled with attendance with Environment in Communities Group over the last few months</p> <p>Environment Volunteering is working very well, and opportunities are highlighted and voluntary groups wider opposed are being spread around the county</p>		

	<p>which is good practicing that can be shared. The link for this is Abbi Thompson Colleague Hannah and VB and team are working on a partnership project around food waste this is developing slowly but in the right direction</p> <p><u>Chair Update</u> OS – launched all big spring clean events and coronavirus hasn't given reason to cancel those events yet CDP Update – The Partnership are reviewing branding and will be confirming which thematic groups would be heading towards being retained. Secondly the opportunity to review the CDP Performance Indicators so will need to select most important to us. Coronavirus – nothing other than what is already in the public domain. Cllr Henig is keen to have AAP Events in the summer. The Forum meetings is an opportunity to do this</p>		
8.	<p><b>Environment Partnership Communications</b> LW mentioned that there is a new designer in Design and Print If anyone has any comments can you, please let LW know ASAP</p> <p>SB will feed in on Tree Challenge and OS will feedback by next Wednesday</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p> <p><b>SB &amp; OS</b></p>	
9.	<p><b>AOB</b> VB mentioned that it is World Environment Day on 5<sup>th</sup> June and Environment activities will be taking place. The theme is beat plastic pollution. Over 250 schools have signed up to plastic pledge. Trying to get the message out by using Eco brick made from single use plastic</p> <p>Expecting round 2 of DEFRA consultation and are expecting a radical reform for waste policy. Round two will be delayed until the summer once its live responses will be sent.</p> <p>OS thanked everyone for attending today</p>		
11.	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting:</b> 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020, 10.00am, Town Hall, Durham</p>		