

**Meeting:** Environment & Climate Change Partnership Executive Board

**Date & Time:** 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 2.00pm

**Venue:** Online Via Teams



<b>Present:</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
	Jim Cokill (JC) Chair	Durham Wildlife Trust
	Steve Bhowmick (SB)	Durham County Council
	Jon Gluyas (JG)	Durham University
	Suzanne McDermott (SM)	County Durham Sport
	Kate Burrows (KB)	Durham Community Action
<b>Also in attendance:</b>	Angela Brown (ABro) <b>(Minutes)</b>	Durham County Council
	Glenn Robinson (GR)	Durham County Council
	Simon Park (SPark)	Durham University
	Heather Orton (HO)	Presenting <b>Item 4</b>
	Andy Kerr (AK)	Presenting <b>Item 4</b>
	Ellie Grimes (EG)	Presenting Climate Emergency update
<b>Apologies:</b>		
	Sue Parkinson	Vice Chair of CDEP
	Alan Patrickson	Durham County Council
	David Loudon	Durham university
	Stuart Priestly	Durham County Council
	Cllr Mark Wilkes	Durham County Council
	Maggie Bosanquet	Durham County Council
	Chris Woodley-Stewart	NP AONB

Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
1.	<b>Welcome and apologies.</b>	<p>JC welcomed everyone to ECCP meeting.</p> <p>Apologies for the meeting were noted.</p> <p>JC mentioned that as the Board is struggling for numbers at today's meeting, he would welcome feedback – do we continue as we are or do we review the Board's role. If this Board is not something people value, then how can more be delivered from this meeting?</p> <p>SB felt that a lot of our meeting's content is subgroups' duplication - this is an issue we need to consider. Some issues are very cross cutting. Maybe meetings could be cut down to meeting twice per year with any issues emailed to Board members in between meetings.</p> <p>EG agreed with SB and felt it would be better to avoid having meetings at holiday time.</p> <p>JG feels face-to-face meetings work much better for larger groups.</p> <p>It was agreed that JC will meet with SB and GR to produce proposal for the Board and will then circulate to Board members to let them know.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>JC to meet with SB and GR and then inform Board members on outcome.</b></li> </ul>	JC/SB/GR	
2.	<b>Minutes of the meeting 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023</b>	The minutes from the meeting on the <b>8 March 2023</b> were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting.		

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3.	ECCP Workstream Updates	<p><b>Place, Health, and Communities Workstream – Kate Burrows</b>  The last meeting was a productive sharing of ideas. Had a good presentation from Housing where the group were asked to consider the Housing Strategy and draw out the key links. This generated significant conversation throughout the group, recognising parts of the agenda that everyone is linking to and pulling these together to have a collective view.  Looked at Towns and Villages initiative which gave opportunity to flag up areas where there could be follow up.  At future meeting are we are keen to have look at the Poverty Action Strategy. We are also looking at Sport England Funding to highlight places for active travel. As a group its about having right people in room and interesting topics to discuss.</p> <p><b>Climate Emergency Workstream – Jon Gluyas</b>  <i>Redhill Pitman Parliament</i> - the group toured the works there. Plan is extremely ambitious; it will be low carbon building with ground source heat going in and it will develop into exhibition meeting space, with strong element of delivering net zero low carbon economy. If anyone has not been, it is a gem of a building and definitely worth a visit.</p> <p><i>Durham Air Quality Action Plan</i> – This was presented by the DCC Environmental Protection Manager, our group are on circulation list for consultation - green infrastructure was highlighted in the meeting.</p> <p><i>Solar Energy Supplementary Planning Document</i> - EG added the link to the consultation in chat.</p> <p><i>Durham University Biodiversity Strategy</i> – The group highlighted how important it was to join up work with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy – they facilitated an introduction with members of Durham University working group and the lead for Houghall College.</p> <p>We have lost Richard Hixon from NHS - he has been replaced by Sam Goss. We have spoken about a new initiative - about 20% of all hospitals sit on red</p>		

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		<p>Triassic sands which are hot, we are trying to develop a programme to provide power to these hospitals this is called Red Beds.</p> <p>We have been briefing and advising the Tory party through Kieron Mullen on geothermal and carbon capture and storage – a document was presented to Parliament a couple of weeks ago on geothermal which complimented Durham as an area of best practice. Have also been briefing the Office of Ed Miliband on the further development of storage linked to Durham Initiatives.</p> <p>We have been asked to host the launch of UK wide white paper on deep geothermal - week beginning 17<sup>th</sup> July.</p> <p>There is a drive to turn a former Eastgate cement works site into carbon eco tourist attraction working with geothermal energy and lithium, hoping to extract lithium from warm waters there.</p> <p><b>Ecological Emergency Workstream</b>  The Ecological Emergency Workstream has been waiting on guidance from DEFRA before undertaking any significant work on the LNRS, although work in the background has continued.</p> <p>The DEFRA guidance was released on the 23rd of March 2023 and both Natural England and DEFRA have held meeting with the Responsible Authorities producing the LNRS to run through the guidance and financial support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A meeting of the EE Workstream took place in April to discuss the guidance, determine the next steps and begin the process of identifying biodiversity priorities.</li> <li>• DCC have appointed a new Senior Ecologist post (having been unsuccessful in recruiting a LNRS Co-ordinator Post); the idea behind the new post is to attempt to create the capacity within the Ecology Team to progress the LNRS.</li> </ul>		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural England are testing Condatis (<a href="http://wordpress.condatis.org.uk/">http://wordpress.condatis.org.uk/</a>) to 'identify the best locations for habitat creation and restoration to enhance existing habitat networks and increase connectivity across landscapes.' DCC proposed using magnesium limestone grassland as the trial habitat and Natural England are now liaising with the local record centre (ERIC) for data on magnesium limestone grassland distribution and Local Wildlife Sites and Local Nature Reserves with a magnesium limestone interest. This trail will feed into the mapping process for the LNRS.</li> <li>• ERIC and DCC Ecologists continue to work on the mapping, collating baseline data and identifying any gaps. ERIC are involved with two Natural England projects to inform the LNRS mapping. The first of these is an Urban Modelling Project, based on Greater Manchester model, which aims to develop a way to model the urban environment. The second project is around mapping using species data and how this will link to broader habitat mapping.</li> <li>• ERIC has produced a model to increase its capacity to deliver the LNRS mapping. ERIC is proposing two new members of staff over two years to deliver across all 4 LNRS within their area. New staff cost will be covered by the financial support provided to Responsible Authorities by Govt</li> <li>• Meetings have been held between the regional Local Authority Ecologists, the Wildlife Trusts, and Tees Valley Local Nature Partnerships to discuss the LNRS across the region and how best to ensure cross boundary co-ordination of the LNRS. It is likely that this grouping will form the basis of a cross boundary group tasked with ensuring that each LNRS is cognisant of each other, and linkages are made between the mapping and biodiversity priorities.</li> <li>• Progress in being made in setting up a cross boundary relationship with the Yorkshire LNRS, with Natural England leading on developing this forum.</li> </ul>		

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4.	<b>Devolution &amp; Impact on Environment Issues – Heather Orton/Andy Kerr</b>	<p>HO gave a presentation to the Board on Devolution and its impact on Environment issues.</p> <p><i>Questions/Comments</i> It was asked if this included green infrastructure – HO mentioned that it did and that it is seen as an important element.</p> <p>AK mentioned that it transfers more flexibility to the mayor, but we will still have to comply with legislation.</p> <p>It was asked if they knew yet what route will be used to lobby the new Board. AK replied that the devolution process will allow plenty of opportunity to get voice heard, he mentioned that there will be a leader from DCC who will sit of Board of the Mayor.</p> <p>JG felt there was an opportunity to influence agendas as a combined authority emerges - Uni students could look at low carbon and examine what greenspace across the combined authority area looks like. How this could feed into green jobs.</p> <p>HO agreed to come back to the Board with updates as things progress.</p> <p>JC asked if Board had a role in influencing the agenda. JG works on internationally significant projects which should be considered. KB said we need to recognise the challenge of rurality. GR suggested JC speaks to Oliver Sherratt about the board’s role. JG and KB would like to be involved in discussions.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HO to send presentation to AB for circulation to Board members.</b></li> <li>• <b>HO to come back to give update to Board as these progresses.</b></li> <li>• <b>JC to speak to Oliver Sherratt about ECCP role and include JG and KB</b></li> </ul>	<p>HO HO JC</p>	

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5.	<b>Green Economy Study/IES Productivity Group</b> - <b>Ellie Grimes/Jim Cokill</b>	<p>EG gave a presentation to the Board on the Green Economy Study/IES Productivity Group</p> <p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>JC asked what are we going to do with the study results? EG mentioned that it would be used for funding bids - there is a particular funding bid we are looking at it at the moment for decarbonisation of industrial clusters so we will be able to look at where there are green hubs of excellence that we want to decarbonise. It has been used in the Inclusive Economic Strategy - we had volunteer in recently who was comparing the results of what we had looked at in the green economy study and identifying synergies with the Inclusive Economic Strategy Principles. So, it will be two-pronged approach - it will be used for data in evidence for policy development and in funding applications moving forward.</p> <p>JC mentioned he is a member of productivity group for Inclusive Economic Strategy he asked if the Economic Strategy Group has this information – yes, Glenn Martin has this information, he is on the steering group.</p> <p>JC will ask if EG could be part of the Productivity Group.</p> <p>KB mentioned that there has been a rural economy study done she asked EG if the mapping would link with this. EG will speak to Sue Parkinson regarding this.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>JC to speak to Productivity Group to see if EG can be added to this group.</b></li> <li>• <b>EG to speak to Sue Parkinson about rural economy study links.</b></li> </ul>	<p>JC</p> <p>EG</p>	
6.	<b>Environment Awards 2023 – Steve Bhowmick</b>	<p>SB shared the Environment Awards 2023 report with Board members in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>He is happy to take views - then it will progress to Alan Patrickson Management Team</p>		

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		<p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>JC suggested calling the top level of sponsorship 'green'.</p> <p>KB mentioned she would like to be involved in judging the awards.</p> <p>SMcD felt it was great to see the Health and Wellbeing aspect being supported in the awards and mentioned that County Durham Sport would like to support and feed in where appropriate. SB felt that element of expertise would be welcome.</p> <p>JG said, in relation to Climate Change, we need to make sure we are clear what this is. SB - should be something action orientated maybe 'Responding to Climate Change.'</p> <p>GR felt that the success of the awards depends on number of applications coming in from people. The workstreams could proactively promote the awards with wider partners at their meetings.</p> <p>KB mentioned DCA are engaged with community groups about becoming greener together and they are delivering engagement activities in Co Durham. They are encouraging investment in the environment, so there are synergies between their work and the awards – they can promote the awards to all partners.</p> <p>SB said there is no Environment Awards Team, everyone that is working on it has another job so all members of Board will need to help to promote the awards.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>KB would like to be involved in Judging for the Environment Awards</b></li> </ul>	<p>KB</p>	



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7.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	<p>SP thanked JC and EG for coming down to support Greenspace Festival - it was great to have stall from Durham Wildlife Trust and Low Carbon Team at the event, which went really well. They will be looking to organise another in 2024. Good news that we have been awarded a grant from Selex for Low Carbon Skills Fund around £100,000 to look at producing decarbonisation plans for 4 of our buildings.</p> <p>JC reminded the Board he will catch up with everyone with a refresh plan for the Board.</p>		
	<b>Date and time of Next Meeting</b>	<b>The next meeting of the ECCP Board will be 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 2pm online via Teams</b>		

#### Summary of Actions (as meeting date above)

No	Action	Lead	Timescale
1	<b>ECCP Board</b> – JC to meet with SB and GR and then inform Board members of outcome	<b>JC</b>	
2	<b>Devolution and impact on Env issues</b> – HO to send presentation to AB for circulation to Board members	<b>HO</b>	
3	<b>Devolution and impact on Env issues</b> – HO to come back and update Board as Devolution progresses	<b>HO</b>	
4	<b>Devolution and impact on Env issues</b> – JC to speak with Oliver Sherratt or Steve McDonald	<b>JC</b>	
5	<b>Green Economy Study/IES Productivity Group</b> – JC to speak to Productivity Group to see if EG can be added	<b>JC</b>	
6	<b>Green Economy Study/IES Productivity Group</b> – EG to speak to Sue Parkinson about rural economy study links	<b>EG</b>	
7	<b>Environment Awards</b> - KB would like to be involved in judging the Environment Awards	<b>KB</b>	