



## County Durham Environment Partnership Board Minutes

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014**  
**Burlison Room, Town Hall, Durham**

**Apologies:**

Alan Hunter	-	English Heritage
Adrian Vass	-	Natural England
Steve Hunter	-	Climate Change Group
Julian Carrington	-	Environment Agency

**Attendees:**

<b>Chair:</b> Terry Collins	-	Durham County Council
Julie Form	-	Groundwork North East
Jim Cokill	-	Durham Wildlife Trust
Andrew Turner	-	Environment Agency
Oliver Sherratt	-	Durham County Council
Steve Bhowmick	-	Durham County Council
John Reed	-	Durham County Council
Andy Palmer	-	Durham County Council
Gordon Elliott	-	Durham County Council
Stuart Timmiss	-	Durham County Council
Jayne Watson	-	Durham County Council
Stella Hindson	-	Durham County Council
Vicki Burrell	-	Durham County Council
Beverley Clark (Minutes)	-	Durham County Council

Item No.	Subject	Action By
1.	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies noted.	
2.	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b> Consideration was given to the minutes of 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2014.	
3.	<b>Presentation from Economic Partnership &amp; Questions</b> Andy Palmer gave a presentation on the North East European Structural and Investment Fund 2014-20. The main points of the presentation being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NELEP has been allocated £473m for 2014 to 2020 and £11m rural EAFRD funding has been allocated for tourism, market towns and business</li> </ul>	

support. County Durham has been allocated £132m as a Transition Region. County Durham has also been allotted an additional £7.7m as part of the Youth Employment Initiative.

- Proposed investments are aligned to EU thematic objectives :- Innovation, ICT, SME, Low Carbon, Climate Change, Energy Efficiency, Sustainable Transport, Employability, Social Inclusion and Skills.
- The process for the programme is different to ones in the past. This one is a single national programme with a strong role for the North East LEP. LEP strategies on spend proposals were submitted to Government in January 2014. Negotiation with Government is taking place (January to April 2014). Member State Partnership Contract to EU Commission in May 2014 followed by 6 month negotiation. Spend money in January 2015 at the earliest.
- The minimum spending levels at national level in transition regions – ERDF/ESF split is proposed at 60:40.
- A summary of proposed delivery arrangements and items still under consideration.
- Opportunities include greater flexibility over spending than non Transition areas, Durham Programme and CDEP recognised as part of Governance and the decision making process, as Durham is a Transition region there is initially Durham money for Durham and 40% match funding required.
- A list of Durham Planned Activities was outlined showing the split of ERDF/ESF funding aligned against EU Thematic Objectives.
- EU Programme 2014-2020 Planned Durham Outputs comprise of 4247 jobs created, 20 site developments, 2775 enterprises receiving support.
- Next steps of the programme include: to engage with ESIF negotiations throughout 2014; work with NELEP to determine governance and approval pathways; continue to work with partners in Durham to develop projects from April 2014 onwards; identify projects for match with Local Growth Fund; support applicants with project proposals.

Vicki Burrell to circulate the North East European Structural and Investment Fund 2014-20 presentation.

It was agreed that coordination between the groups is necessary regarding where the money is spent. Julie Form stated that the sub-groups of the Environment Partnership need to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to funding applications. Discussions to be held within the groups and Chairs/Vice-Chairs to bring back

Vicki Burrell

Chairs/Vice-Chairs

	possible projects to the Board meeting.	
4.	<p><b>Sustainable Communities Strategy Update/Feedback from the Partnership on Thematic Links</b></p> <p>Gordon Elliott gave an update on The Sustainable Community Strategy for County Durham document which went to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> March. There will be a launch event with an environment focus in September.</p> <p>Gordon stated that he would like input/ideas from the Board regarding cross cutting issues e.g. alcoholism, volunteering, job creation, etc.</p> <p>Julie Form stated that she had been requested by the County Durham Partnership to lead on the issue of volunteering. Julie and Vicki to meet to discuss cross cutting issues in relation to the Environment Partnership.</p>	Vicki Burrell/Julie Form
5.	<p><b>Updates from Group Chairs &amp; Questions</b></p> <p><u>Coastal, Heritage &amp; Landscape Group</u></p> <p>Oliver Sherratt circulated a newsletter which had been produced by the group. It is hoped that as well as summarising accomplishments and spreading best practice, the newsletter will help to raise the profile across the Partnership.</p> <p>The group has agreed the Project Initiation Document (PID).</p> <p>Key projects have been identified and work has started this week on the Wildflower Meadows project. The bid for Ushaw College was unsuccessful (Heritage at Risk category). Work is ongoing with Heritage Skills, Green Jobs, Heart of Teesdale, Limestone Landscapes and Northern Lands. The new national coastal path opens on 12<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p><u>Environment in Your Communities</u></p> <p>Julie Form reported that she had had a discussion with Tim Wright from the Public Health Team and how health can be incorporated alongside the Environment agenda.</p> <p>The group is concentrating on a two level approach:- a local level and strategic level. The group is moving forward on The Big Spring Clean and supporting this. It's also focusing on disseminating messages via coordinated joint communications plan.</p> <p>Work continues on the community food growing project. Costings have been made and it is estimated that it will cost around £85,000 per year to develop 10 community centres/hubs and gardens. This total includes employees, tools, maintenance, etc.</p> <p>Ian Hault had informed the group about the schools litter campaign.</p> <p>It was stated that the Comms strategy is very important and would it be possible to link Fresher's Week with other campaigns e.g. litter campaigns.</p> <p>Looking for volunteers for Britain in Bloom.</p>	

	<p><u>Climate Change</u>  John Reed stated that there's lots of communication going on. The group is looking at promoting European funding.  They're focusing on 5 projects, one of which is street lighting.  Julie suggested that a meeting is needed to discuss European funding to see what others are planning. It was agreed to have a meeting. It was highlighted that a coordinated approach to funding is required. See point 3 regarding funding opportunities.</p> <p><u>Local Nature Partnership</u>  Jim Cokill asked what part does the LNP have regarding European funding. Is it for DCC only? The place to start is match funding.  Jim attended a meeting in London recently and reported that there's no Government money going into these things. He reported that Chris Woodley-Stewart gave a good presentation. The North East Partnership chair gave a presentation to the LEP board. LEP is directly in touch with developers. The Lowland Durham post has been filled and an officer starts on 12<sup>th</sup> May.  Northern Uplands – ongoing works.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Environment Partnership Communications</b>  A discussion took place as to whether any Environment Week activities had been planned for this year and the possibility of linking Britain in Bloom to Environment Day. Stella Hindson asked if it would be worthwhile to have a diary of events, which all partners can feed into.  It was suggested that as there are lots of activities taking place perhaps a scheme similar to 'Caring for your Environment Awards' could be introduced to raise the profile. Volunteers are reluctant to put themselves forward for awards but would more likely accept an award if nominated.  Terry asked Stella to produce a mock-up award and to look into the branding of it. Stella to speak to Gordon Elliott regarding branding.  Jayne Watson suggested keeping a log centrally of good deeds.</p>	<p>Vicki  Burrell/Stella  Hindson/Gordon  Elliott</p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Environment Awards Update</b>  Steve Bhowmick circulated mock-up front covers of the commemorative booklet and gave an update on The Environment Awards, the key points being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A revised and refreshed format for the 25<sup>th</sup> year including a new category for creation and improvement of public open space, more recognition of role of regeneration and health benefits in schemes and more low carbon technologies as part of the Climate Change</li> </ul>	

	<p>category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The judging process to be streamlined and more focussed in specialist areas of Communities, Sustainability and Built and Natural Environment. New judges being sought to join the panel in a shadow capacity and Board Members asked to consider candidates.</li> <li>• The Environment Awards to be launched on 5<sup>th</sup> June (World Environment Day) at the Gala Theatre, to include presentations from past Outstanding winners in the key areas (Communities, Sustainability and Built and Natural Environment). The Finalists ceremony will be held on 13<sup>th</sup> November at the Radisson Hotel in Durham when the commemorative book will be launched so that 2014 winners can be included. The Board to be invited to both events.</li> <li>• The Comms plan has been finalised and invitations to participate have been sent to judges and prospective sponsors.</li> <li>• Terry Collins and Stuart Timmiss to meet with Darren Knowd to discuss sponsorship opportunities through DCC procurement arrangements.</li> <li>• Oliver Sherratt proposed a greater tie-up to Britain in Bloom as possible added value for eligible projects. Oliver to arrange a suitable slot at the Launch event.</li> </ul>	<p>All</p> <p>SB</p> <p>TC/ST</p> <p>OS</p>
8.	<b>AOB</b> None.	