

## County Durham Environment Partnership Board Minutes

## Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2014 Burlison Room, Town Hall, Durham

## Apologies

| Julian Carrington<br>Jim Cokill<br>Gordon Elliott | -<br>-<br>- | Environment Agency<br>Durham Wildlife Trust<br>Durham County Council |
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| Attendees:<br>Chair: Terry Collins                | -           | Durham County Council  |
| Julie Form  | -           | Groundwork North East  |
| Adrian Vass                                       | -           | Natural England  |
| Tara Duncan                                       | -           | Durham University  |
| Oliver Sherratt                                   | -           | Durham County Council  |
| Steve Bhowmick                                    | -           | Durham County Council  |
| Maggie Bosanquet                                  | -           | Durham County Council  |
| Jayne Watson                                      | -           | Durham County Council  |
| Corinne Walton                                    | -           | Durham County Council  |
| Victoria Burrell                                  | -           | Durham County Council  |
| Stella Hindson                                    | -           | Durham County Council  |
| Beverley Clark (Minutes)                          | -           | Durham County Council  |

| ltem<br>No. | Subject  | Action By |
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| 1.          | Welcome and Introductions<br>The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and<br>apologies noted.  |           |
| 2.          | Minutes and Matters Arising<br>Consideration was given to the minutes of 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2014.<br>No issues were raised.   |           |
| 3.          | AAP Update and Discussion<br>Corinne Walton from the Derwent Valley AAP introduced<br>herself to the Board. She gave an AAP update where the<br>following areas were noted:<br>The AAP's have been established for 5 years. Back in<br>2009, seven of the AAP's had environment as a priority.<br>However over the years there has been a decline in the<br>number of AAP's listing environment as a priority with an<br>increased focus on health, welfare and employment.<br>Between 2009-2014 £2,065 million has been invested, |           |

|    | £2,320 million match funded and 265 environment related projects have been developed.<br>Examples of AAP projects include Wildflower Project, Durham Riverbanks Initiative, Louisa Community Garden Group, School Allotments, HAGGRID (an alternative education programme), reuse project, rail paths and walkways, environmental improvements, shop fronts and gateways.<br>Engagement and County Pride – The AAP's meet groups who have real passion for where they live. Communities and schools have more desire to be involved.<br>Engagement and Empowerment – Corinne stated that there is a great sense of community resilience and willing to work with others. The AAP's fund small grant schemes and support neighbourhoods and partners.<br>Other groups involved with AAP's include community groups, schools, partners (housing, health, police, fire), Town and Parish Councils, elected members, Environmental organisations (Groundwork NE, DWT), youth organisations and other DCC departments.<br>Corinne to electronically circulate the presentation to all.<br>Corinne put two questions to the Board on behalf of the AAP's:-<br>1).Where would the Environmental Thematic Partnership like the AAPs to focus their efforts locally using existing networks?<br>2).What would the Environmental Thematic Partnership encourage AAPs to promote through the Neighbourhoods Budget process as potential projects/schemes?<br>A discussion followed and the work of the AAPs was commended.<br>It was stated that this might be the opportunity to build on success and involve all AAP packages and pick up some elements of others. Perhaps approach all AAPs and ask for examples of projects? The possibility of each AAP buying CCTV cameras to use in problem areas.<br>Julie Form asked if a best practice bank exists.<br>Corinne to feedback good practice ideas so that there is a set of case studies that could be replicated. Funding maybe available to aid a project that's worked well in the past. | Corinne<br>Walton |
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|    | past.<br>It was also suggested that best practice ideas can be<br>included in partnership newsletters and also on the<br>website.   |                   |
| 4. | Climate Change Group  |                   |
|    | Terry Collins reported that Steve Hunter had resigned from<br>his position as chair of the Climate Change Group. Terry<br>asked the Board for their view on the way forward for the<br>Climate Change Group.<br>A discussion followed and the following comments were   |                   |
|    | <ul> <li>raised:</li> <li>The group had a wide agenda to address.</li> </ul>  |                   |
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|    | <ul> <li>It was felt that the group had evolved and there was a need to refocus the groups' priorities.</li> <li>The group has been successful and the Climate Change Strategy in the main has been delivered.</li> <li>Problems of mitigation and adaptation.</li> <li>A paper has been written showing the possibilities for the future of the climate change group. They are: <ol> <li>Continue to keep the group as it is with a new chair;</li> <li>Look at what actually exits and strengthen that group and make it part of this board;</li> <li>Appoint sub groups to deal with different issues.</li> </ol> </li> <li>There is a need to raise how important the communication issue is.</li> <li>There was a discussion at the Board in relation to the Climate Change Group. It was concluded that climate change is an important issue and therefore warrants its own group. Topics such as flooding, education and domestic energy needs to be addressed.</li> <li>It was suggested that the group could perhaps concentrate on 3 projects a year and involve wider community partners.</li> <li>Terry Collins asked Tara Duncan to consider being the new chair for the Climate Change Group. Tara Duncan is to formally accept/decline the offer following her consideration.</li> </ul> | Tara Duncan |
| 5. | Updates from Group Chairs & Questions<br>It was stated that the first Caring for Your Environment<br>Award had been issued to The Durham in Bloom Team.<br>If the sub groups have examples of projects please<br>contact Stella regarding publicity.<br>It was suggested that the unsuccessful entries for The<br>Environment Awards could possibly receive an award from<br>the chair instead of receiving a letter.<br>It was noted that the award certificate should be made<br>bigger for publicity shots e.g polystyrene boards, pop up<br>signs.<br>It was pointed out that there is no category in the<br>Environment Awards for engagement itself. This category<br>is to be considered in the future.<br>Terry Collins left the meeting.   |             |
|    | <u>Coastal, Heritage &amp; Landscape Group</u><br>Oliver Sherratt provided an update of the work of the<br>group. Durham City, Chester-le-Street and Sedgefield<br>received awards in this year's Northumbria in Bloom<br>competition as well as other towns and villages in the<br>county.<br>It was reported that the Limestones Landscape Project is<br>coming to an end.<br>The Little Terns Project has been very successful.<br>Wildflower Meadows has seen 2 pilots this year and there<br>are plans to extend them.   | Steve       |

|    | Work is ongoing on the Skerne Landscape Project.<br>The group is looking at hedgerow schemes.<br>A renewed HLF bid has been put together regarding a<br>project at Ushaw College.<br>Heritage Open Days have proved a great success and an<br>update will be given at the next meeting.<br>It was suggested that the timing of the Skerne Project<br>needs to be right so that it doesn't clash with the Uplands<br>Project.  | Bhowmick                 |
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|    | Environment in Your Communities<br>Julie Form stated that she would like to review the<br>membership of her group in order to make it more action<br>and delivery focussed.<br>It was suggested that a representative from Natural<br>England could attend the group meetings in the future.<br>Julie to invite a rep from Natural England.<br>Julie Form to speak to Terry Collins regarding the above<br>issue.   | Julie Form<br>Julie Form |
|    | Local Nature Partnership<br>An update was given by Steve Bhowmick who reported<br>that Claire Thompson is the dedicated officer for LNP work<br>and Frank Major is chair.<br>It was stated that resources will have to be found in order<br>to manage the Climate Change Group.<br>LEPs have substantive funding to help LNPs deliver an<br>economic agenda.<br>LNPs at the present time do not have large resources.<br>LNPs in the north east are taking a positive step forward<br>but how can the LNP have more relevance and how can<br>it's profile be raised? Need to be more outward looking.<br>The recent appointment of the LNP Officer has been<br>invaluable.<br>It was pointed out that there is another Upland Chain LNP<br>in the area and this is well funded. DEFRA has asked for<br>consultation with all LNPs in relation to the Upland Chain<br>and how it will be involved in biodiversity offsetting.<br>It was proposed that Adrian Vass/DEFRA update to be<br>added to future agendas. | Victoria Burrell         |
| 6. | Environment Partnership Communications<br>Stella Hindson circulated copies of The Altogether<br>Greener newsletter. Remarks from Board members<br>regarding the content and look of the newsletter were<br>positive. Stella to circulate the newsletter electronically to<br>all for comments. She asked that members send her<br>articles for the next newsletter as well as any details of<br>awards that have been given.<br>Stella proposed to distribute the newsletter through the<br>partnership so members can in turn circulate through their<br>own organisation.<br>It was agreed that paper copies of the newsletter were not   | Stella Hindson           |
|    | needed.   |                          |

| <ul> <li>Environment Awards Update</li> <li>Steve Bhowmick gave an update and the following points were noted:</li> <li>A panel meeting is to be held later today and the judges will decide who will go forward to the final.</li> <li>There has been an amazing response from across the community with 119 schemes coming forward in the first round. Because there have been so many entries, the categories may be split into three themes: <ul> <li>Sustainability (10 possible prizes)</li> <li>Natural and Built Environment (14 possible prizes)</li> <li>Caring For Your Environment (25 possible prizes)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Aiming to achieve good media for the event this year.</li> <li>The possibility of including the Beautiful Durham Competition in The Environment Awards next year.</li> </ul> |   |
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| <b>County Durham Partnership Event</b><br>Victoria Burrelll provided an update on the County Durham<br>Partnership event and stated that the 'save the date' had<br>changed from 17 <sup>th</sup> October to 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2014. The<br>event is to be held at The Excel Centre at Newton Aycliffe,<br>between 9.30 and 15.00. The event is a celebration of<br>looking at the wider structure of the County Durham<br>Partnership. The format for the day, themes and<br>workshops is currently being developed.<br>Victoria to send details electronically to all.  | Victoria Burrell  |
| <b>AOB</b><br>The date of the next meeting is 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2014, The<br>Burlison Room, Town Hall, Durham.  |   |
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