

DORSET LNP BOARD MEETING

Wednesday 10 June 2020 – 2.00-4.00

Zoom

Board Members

WB	Will Bond	Holme Estate / Alaska Ecological Contracting Ltd / CLA (Vice Chair)
FB	Fiona Bowles	Dorset Catchment Partnerships
RBr	Ray Bryan	Councillor – Dorset Council
PB	Paul Buckley	RSPB
AC	Angela Cott	National Trust
SC	Simon Cripps	Independent Consultant (Chair)
AP	Angela Pooley	SUSTAIN & Bournemouth 2026 Trust
LR	Luke Rake	Dorset LEP / Kingston Maurward College
FR	Felicity Rice	Councillor – BCP Council
SW	Simon Williams	Independent Consultant
FB	Fiona Bowles	Dorset Catchment Partnerships

Officer Working Group Members

IA	Ian Alexander	Natural England
MC	Maria Clarke	DLNP
ID	Imogen Davenport	Dorset Wildlife Trust (minutes)
TM	Tom Munro	Dorset AONB
KP	Karyn Punchard	Dorset Council
IP	Ian Poultney	BCP Council
KT	Kate Tobin	Forestry Commission

In attendance

RBa	Ruth Barden	Wessex Water
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Observing

AK	Annabel King	Dorset Council
JP	Josey Parish	DAPTC Purbeck Area

Apologies for absence

BH	Bob Huggins	Formerly Dorset Coast Forum
KB	Kath Burt	Environment Agency
DH	David Haines	Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board / Swanage GP
RP	Rachel Partridge	Public Health Dorset
MR	Michael Rowland	BCP Council
JM	Jenny Myers	Independent Rep
KR	Kate Ryan	BCP Council

ITEM 1: INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Declarations of interest: None at the outset (see item 8).

ITEM 2: ACTIONS FROM MARCH 2020 BOARD MEETING

See update paper attached to meeting agenda. Actions not completed or on this meeting agenda are:

ITEM 9: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Action	Action Owner	Due Date	Progress
Discuss climate change working group with Nick Squirrell.	MC	Ongoing	In progress. Proposal is to set up an advisory group.
Information on Dorset Pension Fund to be gathered.	MC	June 2020	Still to action.
Renewable energy to be included on the June Board meeting rather than a focus on wind power.	MC	June 2020	Postponed. Due to the meeting going online SC/MC agreed to delay this item to keep the agenda to 2 hours and allow this more discussion time at a later meeting.

ITEM 3: CHAIR'S REPORT

SC summarised his report circulated within the agenda papers and presented his view that it is difficult to get much profile for anything other than Covid-19. SW reported that a survey indicated that environmental services would be more in demand after lockdown ends as interest has picked up. WB and FR had picked up similar vibes. FB suggested writing to government to suggest prioritising green jobs and green priorities. ID mentioned that South East LNPs had collaborated to write to their LEPs along similar lines. AC reported yes there are opportunities but for many organisations (including NT) there is first a funding crisis to get through this year.

TM has heard there is a group on green recovery in Defra, and a paper on green recovery within the Treasury.

KP's teams have found there is a renewed interest in greenspace – rights of way reported three times higher usage. There is a sub-group on environment of the Dorset-wide Covid co-ordination group (IP is a member). Any useful data or measures in relation to Covid impacts on the environment can be sent to IP.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
All to send any contributions / data relating to the environment and Covid to IP.	MC/IP	ongoing
Draft a letter regarding green recovery and consider whether it could be sent from SW LNPs.	MC / SC	End July 2020

ITEM 4: LNP TOR REFRESH AND MEMBER RECRUITMENT

WB summarised the progress since the last meeting – MC has amended the ToR following comments.

RB was concerned about extending the membership to 20 as this would in his view become unwieldy. The rationale for doing this was that we rarely get a full complement attending, so a higher number of members will ensure that meetings include more board member attendees. It was also planned to allow some overlap as membership turns over. SC shares RB's concern, but more concerned to have key people on the Board, which is not a major decision-making body therefore less likely to be holding contentious votes. SW reported he is comfortable with how it has operated, usually largely consensus-based discussions.

MC asked for a view from Local Authorities on whether four elected member reps are wanted or whether one seat (with substitute members) is still adequate?

AC had no concern about larger numbers of board members, but felt that larger groups led to it being hard for everyone to participate, so it would be good to think about how meetings are run, break-out meetings, etc.

KP would like to see certain environmental organisations specified as having a Board seat, to ensure co-ordination. MC reported that WENP have this approach. SC pointed out that it is useful to have people representing competences as well, who do not have to be representing an organisation. FR is happy for an increased number, to increase options for representation, e.g. business in addition to the LEP. She would be happy if councils didn't take the extra seats if that was an issue, or to seek another BCP Councillor rep if it was not.

SC suggested looking at how many it would add up to if we followed up KP's suggestion. MC suggested a separate task meeting on this issue, before the next full meeting.

SC proposed co-opting further members, subject to the determination of numbers on the Board. RBa and ID moved to the waiting room temporarily. SC proposed co-opting Ruth Barden as representative of a corporate body (Wessex Water) and Imogen Davenport as a DWT rep due to their support for the LNP and its administration to the Board.

SC proposed both the co-opted candidates and SW seconded – all were in favour (none against and no abstentions).

RBa and ID co-opted as Board members as reps of their organisations – noting that if they resigned a further discussion would be held on new representations from those organisations. Key organisations are encouraged to suggest a representative of their choice, but the final decision rests with the LNP.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
Further discussion on board make-up and numbers, and potentially a separate meeting to discuss the revised ToR.	WB/MC/SC	End Aug

ITEM 5: LNP BUDGET

MC ran through the report for 2019-20 income and expenditure. The proposed 2020-21 budget was also presented. MC stated that discussions were ongoing with DC and BCP. Funding from the Stepping into Nature National Lottery Community Fund for support for the Health and Nature Dorset collaboration project may or may not happen this year due to Covid-19.

SC – as a policy the LNP is trying to support existing organisations and capacity not expand or compete for funds with partners. But has observed that in the South West those LNPs without a close to full-time manager have failed as dedicated support is critical.

RBr reported that DC are under tremendous pressure for funding, RBr and KB are committed to finding the LNP contribution, but every penny is being strictly looked at. FR also sees it as a high priority and BCP are in a similar financially stretched situation.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
Follow up with funding partners to finalise agreements for 2020-21	MC	Sept 2020

ITEM 6: ENVIRONMENT AGENCY WATER CHALLENGES AND CHOICES CONSULTATION

ID outlined the response drafted by the LNP, which took account of the comments sent in after the last meeting, as well as the draft response from the Dorset Catchment Partnerships. The draft was endorsed, with the following suggestions for refining it:

- Ensure there is a comment suggesting removal of hard engineering where this would be beneficial and feasible.
- Need to ensure that ambition is kept to the fore and that the Environment Agency back that ambition. “Stage Zero Restoration¹” is a new term in the world of floodplain restoration. Some in EA are pushing its potential.
- As well as the response to this consultation, the LNP should be involved in discussions on water resources and climate change. RBr had introduced water resources as part of the Local Plan development. MC reminded the Board of the Water Management position statement developed some time ago which is probably due for review and could incorporate this.
- We should emphasise the key points more strongly – even if there is limited opportunity in the given format. ID will look at where a summary can be slotted in and creating key points.
- It was suggested that this response, and the revised submission and position statement can both be used to input to local plan discussions.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
Any further comments on the draft to MC/ID.	All	End of June.
Finalise and submit response.	MC/ID	August 2020
Bring review of water position statement to a future meeting.	MC	By March 2021

ITEM 7: LNP Annual Report

MC set out the draft Annual Report 2019-20 circulated in the papers. Draft report agreed. SC thanked MC for her work on it. WB pointed out that the objective of getting environmental organisations to talk with each other and co-ordinate is a major success which isn't in the report – it might not need to be, but we should acknowledge it amongst ourselves.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
Organise the graphic design of annual report.	MC	End June 2020

ITEM 8: WESSEX WATER PROGRAMMES

RBa to circulate information setting out the background which she outlined (*see powerpoint presentation attached to these minutes*). Her team are seeking solutions, and as part of evidencing that they gather a lot of data which are a resource they are willing to share more widely. Also working for farmers to reduce diffuse pollution and find offsetting solutions for nitrogen and phosphorus. Wessex Water (WxW) along with DWT host the catchment partnerships which have a similar approach to the LNP in ensuring partners work together.

Main focus in Dorset is around Poole Harbour. But WxW also have a focus on the Stour for nutrient removal where have agreed a flexible approach with EA across the catchment (one of only two companies EA have allowed this for). Looking to remove over 200 tonnes of phosphorus over the next period.

¹ <https://vimeo.com/417996381>

Looking at bathing waters / shellfish waters, especially in relation to Poole Harbour. Looking to achieve excellent status at around 7 bathing water sites in Dorset – mainly in the Poole/Bournemouth area.

Water resource investigations are also ongoing, they are mostly on a smaller scale. WxW is working with Bournemouth Water and South West Water about future water resources.

There is a commitment in Poole Harbour to deliver biodiversity enhancements – looking at producing biodiversity outcomes not just nutrient, particularly for pollinators. 80ha of biodiversity improvement in the PH catchment is the target, mainly working with farmers.

About £90m will be invested in Dorset in the next plan period.

RBr thanked RBa for her informative presentation. He would welcome a discussion around climate change-friendly development. Reported that Wessex Water are seeking sites for tree planting as well. IA added that other ways of tree planting like natural regeneration can bring better outcomes. RBa is aware of ‘right tree in the right place’, whilst water companies have also committed to tree planting so this needs to be managed.

KT pointed out that natural regeneration needs supporting and works well when you have the right seed source, but not when there is not an adjacent source. Also the final purpose of any particular woodland needs to be thought about in design, which might mean some planting was needed. She would like to see woodland creation and buffers more specifically highlighted as a benefit for pollution reduction. There are some examples of woods for water projects which work with landowners in other parts of the country.

WxW has a partners’ programme fund; MC explained that the LNP has been asked whether it can lead a bid on behalf of the Stour Valley Park Partnership. This is because Local Authorities are not eligible to apply and the LNP is involved in the partnership. This was agreed – RBa and FB abstained due to conflict of interest.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
Send presentation to MC	RBa	End June 2020
Respond to Stour Valley Park and support bid drafting	MC	31 July 2020

ITEM 9: LNP CAMPAIGNS 2020-21

Postponed due to lack of time for discussion.

ITEM 10: LNP BLOGS

MC – Martina at the LEP has asked if we could write a blog on home working to promote the benefits as part of the Covid-19 economic recovery. MC asked if IA could do this, because Natural England have used home working for some years and might have more of a perspective than others. IA will

KT suggested right tree in the right place and FB resilience in water.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
Draft a blog on the environmental angle on home working.	IA	End June 2020
Follow up with KT and FB regarding suggestions for blogs.	SC/MC	July 2020
Provide suggestions of blogs to MC/SC	All	15 June 2020

ITEM 11: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a. Dorset Local Industrial Strategy – Investment Prospectus

Government are still to endorse the Dorset LIS. The LEP is going forward in developing an Investment Prospectus (LIS implantation plan) and Sandra Rothwell has been appointed as consultant on this and looking to engage the LNP. Timescale – initial work until July, looking to finalise the prospectus by the end of the calendar year. MC suggested holding a separate workshop as we did for the production of the LIS.

LR reported Martina and Sandra are meeting this week to start that work off. He would hope Sandra could attend the next board meeting.

AP would like to see the LNP lobbying government to ensure any trade deals are sustainable, is that something the SW LNPs are lobbying government on? SC not convinced we are in a place to lead but could go in with others on joint representations. WB sees this as becoming more relevant, as the LEP looks to better cover the rural area.

LR – investment prospectus could well look to including more on local food supply chains and that would be highly relevant to the LNP.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
Contact Sandra Rothwell re LNP engagement	MC	End June 2020

b. NFU’s work to reduce nitrate pollution in Poole Harbour

MC had circulated the update from the NFU. FB reported that of 4 projects announced nationally this was the only one which was industry-led. WB is involved in the project. As would be expected there are some farmers who really get the need and are leading the way, and others need to be brought on board. There is a risk that not everyone will join, but it is good to see industry leading on solving its problems.

c. Woodland Trust

SW was in correspondence with Woodland Trust, who had said in passing that they would be interested in working with the LNP. So it would be worth involving them in any discussion on ‘right tree, in the right place’. MC is in contact with WT (Heather Elgar and other WT staff). KT has also regular catch ups with them.

ITEM 12: DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Wednesday 9 Sept 2020: 2pm-4.30 – Agreed to move to Zoom call due to need for social distancing (we had provisionally arranged the Learning Centre, Durlston County Park, Swanage)
- Wednesday 9 Dec 2020: 2pm-4.30 – Committee Suite, Poole Civic Centre, BH15 2RU
- Wednesday 10 March 2021: 2pm-4.30 – tbc
- Wednesday 9 June 2021: 2pm-4.30 – Brownsea tbc