

DORSET LNP BOARD MEETING

Wednesday 9 September 2020 – 2.00-4.30

Zoom

Board Members

WB	Will Bond	Holme Estate / Alaska Ecological Contracting Ltd / CLA (Vice Chair)
RBr	Ray Bryan	Councillor – Dorset Council
PB	Paul Buckley	RSPB
SC	Simon Cripps	Wildlife Conservation Society (Chair)
AC	Angela Cott	National Trust
ID	Imogen Davenport	Dorset Wildlife Trust
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

Officer Working Group Members

IA	Ian Alexander	Natural England
KB	Ken Buchan	Dorset Council
MC	Maria Clarke	DLNP
AK	Annabel King	Dorset Council
MR	Michael Rowland	BCP Council
KR	Kate Ryan	BCP Council
KT	Kate Tobin	Forestry Commission

In attendance

SR	Sandra Rothwell	Rothwell Consultants for Dorset LEP
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Observing

JP	Josey Parish	DAPTC Purbeck Area
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Apologies for absence

RBa	Ruth Barden	Wessex Water
FB	Fiona Bowles	Dorset Catchment Partnerships
KB	Kath Burt	Environment Agency
BH	Bob Huggins	Formerly Dorset Coast Forum
TM	Tom Munro	Dorset AONB
RP	Rachel Partridge	Public Health Dorset
IP	Ian Poultney	BCP Council
KP	Karyn Punchard	Dorset Council

ITEM 1: INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Declarations of interest: None

ITEM 2: ACTIONS FROM JUNE 2020 BOARD MEETING

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

Actions from March 2020 Board meeting

Action	Action Owner	Due Date	Progress
Discuss climate change working group with Nick Squirrell.	MC	Ongoing	In progress. The plan is to set up an advisory group.
Renewable energy to be included on the June Board meeting rather than a focus on wind power.	MC	Dec 2020	Postponed. Due to the June meeting going online SC/MC agreed to delay this item to keep the agenda to 2 hours. Delayed again due to time limited items on the September Board agenda.

Actions from June 2020 Board meeting

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY WATER CHALLENGES AND CHOICES CONSULTATION

Finalise and submit response.	MC/ID	Sept 2020	Delayed due to Covid-19 but will be submitted before deadline of 24 Sept (<i>submitted since the meeting</i>).
Bring review of water position statement to a future meeting.	MC	By March 2021	Still to progress.

LNP CAMPAIGNS 2020-21

Action	Action Owner	Due Date	Progress
Postponed due to lack of time for discussion. Add to future agenda	SC/MC	Sept 2020	Delayed. Due to SC stepping down as chair it was agreed this should be delayed until the new chair is elected.

ITEM 3: CHAIR'S REPORT

SC presented his final chair's report as circulated with the agenda papers, thanking the board and officers for their engagement in the work of the LNP.

ITEM 4: ELECTION OF NEW LNP CHAIR LNP

Following a nomination process prior to the board meeting WB proposed LR as the new chair. PB seconded the proposal. No further board members were nominated. All board members voted in favour. LR elected as chair and would take up position at the end of the Board meeting.

LR thanked the board for his appointment. He noted his role as KMC principle and chief executive and LEP Board member. SC noted LR's knowledge on environmental, strategic, business, and rural issues were valuable skills to bring to the role as LNP chair.

SC noted he would continue as a member of the board.

SW thanked SC, on behalf of the board, for everything he had done for the LNP over the years.

ITEM 5: DORSET INVESTMENT PROSPECTUS

SC welcomed SR who had been appointed by Dorset LEP to lead the development of the Dorset Investment Prospectus.

SR thanked the LNP for engagement to date in the development of the Dorset Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). She stated that Dorset LEP is awaiting Government to agree the Dorset LIS (delayed due to the December election and Covid-19), but that the LEP is keen to progress the development of the Investment Prospectus to be in a better position to respond to any announcements within the Autumn Statement expected in November.

The Investment Prospectus will move to deliver the LIS over the next 10 years and support economic recovery from Covid-19 in the shorter term. SR noted that the Investment Prospectus needs to demonstrate innovation and preferably at scale (e.g. Dorset-wide or maybe South West) and set out a portfolio of opportunities (which do not need to be fully worked up at this stage).

SR invited the LNP to fast track opportunities for investment including potential future government funding and business investments. Proposals need to be with the LEP by mid-to-late October.

Comments:

SW asked about scale and noted that Dorset is a disparate area. SR noted that the aim was to look about how we do things differently, working together where we can.

KR noted that young people and green technology seem to be areas to invest in. BCP is also looking at a waste project to encourage people to take more responsibility for their waste (a capital project). SR suggested thinking about the circular economy linking waste and energy.

WB noted that it feels like government wants innovation but not risk, and presumed that the government priority would be job creation. SR noted that job creation and skills and training would be the government focus but that this work isn't just about potential government funding.

LR highlighted that whatever comes forward as projects needs to capture ambition. The recent LEP investment into KMC demonstrates that the ambition shown captured the LEPs imagination. We therefore need landscape scale ambition and link urban and rural areas. SR noted that the Comprehensive Spending Review does mention green recovery so now is the time to do it.

MR highlighted the Stour Valley Park project as a potential investment. A consultant is working on developing a plan for the area to include nature, active travel, and job creation.

SC suggested projects that cover nature recovery, health, climate change, energy, and economic outcomes should be the LNP focus. SR noted linking to other strategies to demonstrate that the investments would suggest wider government targets (25 YEP, zero carbon etc.)

AK supported the other suggestions and the links to government targets and see how what we can do locally can bench-mark national targets. There is potential to link other initiatives such as nitrogen management (which can be difficult to allocate funding strategically), therefore combining into a strategic framework would be useful. SR noted that joining those sorts of issues will help.

PB queried if the proposals the LNP put forward at the last LNP workshop were already being included. SR note that yes, this stage is to build on these with more detail and add anything further. SR noted that some of the earlier ideas were at too small-scale so would need to be reviewed to expand on or combine where possible. LR suggested thinking £1m plus.

SC returned to the issue of scale – is this Dorset-wide or South West? SR suggested to focus on what the best mechanism is for delivery, so it could be either. For example, a tourism focused project could work at the South West level.

SR set out the next steps – a proforma is being developed and ideas need to be submitted to the LNP by mid-October. A first draft of the Investment Prospectus is due to be developed by end Dec.

ID noted the workshop planned for late September would enable to the LNP to develop project ideas.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
Hold an LNP workshop in late September to develop project ideas.	MC / ALL	End Sept
Submit projects to LEP by mid-Oct.	MC / ALL	Mid Oct

ITEM 6: BREAK

ITEM 7: MHCLG PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: WHITE PAPER – DRAFT LNP RESPONSE

SW set out the Government Planning for the Future white paper, currently out for consultation until end October. He noted that the proposals are likely to change in the way previous white paper proposals have changed, and it is therefore important to feed in our views. The current planning system is not perfect and does need to change. There is not much detail on how the proposals would be delivered but they could have a detrimental impact on our environment. The three zones system seems a crude way of dividing up the country – does growth mean only growth and does protect mean nothing at all? One issue for Dorset is the raising of the threshold for affordable housing to 40. In Dorset 50 houses is a large-scale development so could result in no affordable housing in Dorset.

SC stressed the balance between the Government steam-lining the process and leaving enough details to ensure decisions are based on evidence, for example environmental impact assessments. Without the details it is difficult to know how this will work, but there does seem to be an erosion of local decision-making in the proposals.

ID noted the front-loading process, with more people having an input into decision making. The EIA process supports this and therefore more investment is needed to inform this process. Zoning areas also goes against the ambition in integrating nature with communities. The paper does not pick up on climate and ecological emergency issues; and it is not clear how net gain features. We have been

advocating for integrated healthy and nature-based communities and these proposals seem to go against that.

PB supported ID's and SW comments about the white paper likely to change so he supports a tough response from the LNP. Highlighting the simplicity of the zones is important. We should recommend that the changes strengthen the commitment to protecting the key wildlife sites locally and nationally. It is not clear if they are safe if in the growth zone. Protect the most important spaces. Does this cover wider waste issues or just housing and economic development? MC noted she did not believe this included waste and minerals planning.

KR supported the draft response and felt it covered initial concerns on the environment. BCP was collating a response across the council and suggested the Green Infrastructure links to sites were not clear in the white paper. In a growth area would GI sites be excluded. KR suggested including a cover letter with the LNP response to highlight the key messages and noting that the white paper seems to be counter to the Environment Plan.

RBr was concerned that the new planning system could become a developer's charter. The draft response covers most of the issues that both councils are concerned about. Dorset Council is also developing a response.

SW proposed that the cover letter includes the LNP not supporting the concept of removing local control in development. The white paper seems to imply that councillors do not already have an input into the plan making stage, which they do, but the new process would take away any decision making once the plan was approved.

WB said that he has concerns that there are dangerous proposals at both ends – a developer's charter but also a having a NIMBY charter at the other end with the protected areas. The Government is looking to see how to implement the Glover Review to ensure we have a living, working countryside and the white paper could stop that.

FR noted that the white paper includes a reference to lack of trust on local authorities, but the same study shows that the public support developers even less (only 2%) which is not mentioned.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
ALL to submit any future comments to MC by end Sept.	ALL	30 Sept
Finalise and submit a response including cover letter.	MC	29 Oct

ITEM 8: ENGLAND TREE STRATEGY CONSULTATION – DRAFT LNP RESPONSE

KT explained the background to the England Tree Strategy which closes on 11 September. The aim is to:

- Support a step change in woodland creation
- Increase the area of woodland in management
- Help protect trees, treescapes and woodland from unsustainable management, climate change and pest and diseases
- Engage people with trees, woodlands, and nature
- Recognise the wide range of ecosystem services that trees and woodland provide
- Support increase use of timber and energy crops, improving forestry productivity and supply chains.

The consultation has four pillars:

- Expanding and connecting trees and woodland
- Protecting and improving our trees and woodland
- Engaging people with trees and woodland
- Supporting the economy.

KT noted that she had not commented on the draft but there were some inaccuracies in the draft response, and she would feed those comments in.

MC noted that the online response form was set out as a series of questions which did not cover the wider strategy and as she had not received many responses to the questions from board and officers. She did not feel in a position to respond to the specific the questions. A draft response was therefore written covering wider topics, including information from The Wildlife Trusts' draft response.

PB noted that we should emphasise the right tree, right place approach and in some places, this might be less trees. The open habitat policy is failing and needs to be reviewed. More emphasis on managing existing woodlands. PB to send specific text to include.

WB highlighted that the draft strategy document made little mention of soils which is a fundamental issue. WB to send text to MC. AK also said she could feed in some comments.

KT reassured the board that soils are fundamental and nature recovery is key to the delivery of the strategy, but that the consultation focused on some key elements, so there are some misconceptions on the strategy document.

KT has been working with Devon LNP and Woodland Trust on a right tree, right place workshop. We could have a similar session. A session was in the process of being planned with Dorset and BCP Councils and could be combined.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
PB, AK and WB to send text to be included.	PB / AK / WB	10 Sept
KT to feed in comments	KT	10 Sept
Submit response by deadline	MC	11 Sept
Discuss the potential to have a right tree, right place webinar	MC / KT	October

ITEM 9: BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT

MC set out that there are currently two vacant position and two further board members are standing down. A recruitment process will be held over the autumn with the aim off recruiting new board members before the December board meeting.

It is proposed that a selection panel is formed to agree the paperwork, shortlist, and interview. Board members were requested to join the panel – LR, WB, ID, AP and RBr agreed to form the selection panel.

It was proposed to advertise the positions on LinkedIn to widen the reach.

Action	Action Owner	Due Date
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Develop and implement recruitment process.	MC / LR / WD / ID / AP / RBr	Dec
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ITEM 10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

AP asked if Eco Solutions have been in touch regarding a consultation on an energy from waste plant in the Parley area. MC noted they had not. SC stated that the LNP would not get involved in any planning processes.

WB echoed SW comments earlier and in his role of Vice-Chair on behalf of the LNP and thanked SC for guiding the LNP since its inception. SC had put in a lot of work locally and nationally and it had been interesting and rewarding to be part of the LNP under SC’s leadership.

SW noted this was his last board meeting and said it had been a pleasure and privilege to be involved and wished the LNP well in the future. SC thanks SW for his support and his considerable input into the board a range of planning issues, especially planning.

ITEM 12: DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Wednesday 9 Dec 2020: 2pm-4.30 – Zoom
- Wednesday 10 March 2021: 2pm-4.30 – Zoom or tbc
- Wednesday 9 June 2021: 2pm-4.30 – Brownsea tbc
- Wednesday 8 Sept 2021: 2pm-4.30 – Zoom or tbc