

Yorkshire Derwent Partnership

Minutes of Board meeting – 4th November 2016, NFU Office, Tadcaster Road, York

Board Members Present:

Jeremy Walker, Chair – Independent member	(JW)
Sir William Worsley – Independent member	(WW)
Alan Menzies - East Riding of Yorkshire Council	(AM)
George Winn-Darley – Country Land and Business Association	(GWD)
Adam Bedford – National Farmers Union	(AB)
Nevil Muncaster – Yorkshire Water	(NM)
Mark Scott – Environment Agency	(MS)
Crispin Thorn – Forestry Commission	(CT)
Richard Shaw – York North and East Yorkshire LEP	(RS)
Terry Smithson – Yorkshire Wildlife Trust	(TS)
Richard Flinton – North Yorkshire County Council	(RF)
Prof. Colin Mellors – Regional Flood and Coastal Committee	(CM)
Andy Wilson – North York Moors National Park Authority	(AW)

In attendance:

Beckie Bennett – Ryedale District Council (Substitute)	(BB)
Duncan Fyfe – EA Catchment Co-ordinator	(DF)
Karen Saunders – Partnership Facilitation Officer/Secretariat	(KS)

Apologies:

Prof. Ian Cowx – East Yorkshire Rivers Trust
Janet Waggott – Ryedale District Council
Natural England – awaiting confirmation of replacement of David Shaw

Summary of Actions:

No.	Action	Who?
1	Make sure the minutes of the last meeting are circulated with papers for future Board meetings and a standing item is included on agendas to sign-off previous minutes.	KS
2	Discuss with co-hosts if EYRT or YWT would want to take on the role of Vice-Chair.	JW/KS
3	JW to update the objectives and send to the Board for final comment/approval	JW
4	Each organisation to identify one of two key areas where they think collaboration is essential in order to meet their individual objectives. Send suggestions to JW/KS.	All
5	KS to update the Terms of Reference with the agreed changes.	KS
6	KS to send papers/minutes of Board meetings to the Delivery Group and send minutes of the Delivery Group to Board members	KS
7	DF to represent the Delivery Group at Board meetings.	DF
8	Delivery Group to do detailed budget	Del. Grp
9	JW to continue funding discussions with partners	JW
10	Review the need for a website in about 12 months, but think about a brand sooner.	KS
11	MS to contact Innes Thompson, Chief Executive of ADA, to discuss IDB involvement.	MS

1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

JW welcomed people to the meeting and thanked the NFU for providing the meeting room. There was a round of introductions and apologies were noted from Prof. Ian Cowx (EYRT), Janet Waggott (Ryedale District Council) and Natural England which is in the process of deciding who will replace David Shaw on the Board.

JW noted that the minutes had not been circulated with the papers for this meeting. This will be done for future meetings so that minutes can be reviewed and signed off at Board meetings.

ACTION: KS to make sure the minutes of the last meeting are circulated with papers for future Board meetings and a standing item is included on agendas to sign-off minutes.

2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Jeremy Walker was elected as the Chair for the Partnership. (Proposed by George Winn-Darley; Seconded by Prof. Colin Mellors and endorsed by the Board). It was agreed that the Vice-Chair would be elected at the next meeting.

ACTION: JW/KS to discuss with co-hosts if EYRT or YWT would want to take on the role of Vice-Chair.

3. Partnership Objectives and Measures

JW introduced the paper and asked the Board to comment on the revised set of objectives and initial thoughts on potential measures.

Objectives – In discussion RS sought greater clarity on the role of the Board; RF was concerned not to include objectives that the Partnership is unable to deliver either directly or indirectly; CM stressed the need for additionality. JW explained that the Board is about oversight/governance, providing accountability and giving confidence to all partners and funders that investment would deliver. It would help facilitate funding and enable partners to share information, resolve issues and identify collaborative advantage at a senior level. RF said it also helped to ensure commitment.

In discussion, whilst there was support for the draft objectives, it was suggested that greater emphasis should be given to flood risk reduction and protecting drinking water supply. It should also be explicit that improving public access was about improving the quality of existing arrangements. Uncertainty was expressed as to the meaning of ‘naturally functioning river system.’ There was recognition that we need to capture the broad environmental remit of the Partnership beyond flood risk and specifically the impact that land management changes could have in supporting many of the objectives. MS asked about timescale. He also queried the extent to which, in order to make the objectives and ambition relevant/ meaningful to local communities, we should include something linked to species? For example, a project based in Sheffield has the strapline “Salmon to Sheffield.”

JW said that the original objectives had in mind the ten-year Water Framework Directive timeframe to deliver by 2027, but in reality some things may take longer. He reminded the group that individual projects would also have their own set of objectives/measures which would need to be reported on in order to ensure that the overall strategy was being delivered.

ACTION: JW to update the objectives and send to the Board for final comment/approval.

Measures – In looking at possible measures there was general agreement that the Board should focus on the additional benefit and output that working as a Partnership could achieve. NM said that there are some things that individual organisations will be able to do without input from other partners. The key was for organisations to identify and articulate the areas where they would really benefit from collaboration.

Board members noted the importance of, but challenge in, identifying a high-level economic measure and discussed whether a measure could be developed, linked to infrastructure protection, rather than just properties protected in relation to any measure linked to flood risk and whether surrogates could be used to monitor the economic impact, such as natural capital or visitor numbers to give an indication of value or the value of salmon in the river.

The Board asked if we could bench mark our performance against others. KS advised that there are other catchment partnerships in England and Wales (c100) which could potentially be used to bench mark activities if the Board wished to do that. A more qualitative assessment needed to ensure that individual partners were satisfied with the direction of the Partnership and its work. Each Partner might review progress on an annual basis from their own perspective which when brought together would indicate the degree of added value.

Summing up the discussion JW said it made sense to use existing data for any measure. The Board clearly wanted to ensure additionality so each Member should set out the one or two most important things their organisation might wish to achieve through the partnership but could not do independently. This would provide a basis for the Delivery Group to do further work on the issues.

ACTION: Each organisation to identify one of two key areas where they think collaboration is essential in order to meet their individual objectives. Send suggestions to JW/KS.

4. Governance Arrangements

JW and KS introduced the paper. The status of future Board meetings was discussed and it was agreed that once minutes have been approved, they would be posted on the Partnership's webpages (hosted on the EYRT website). Individuals could be invited to attend meetings on a case by case basis.

Minor amendments to the Terms of Reference were discussed and agreed subject to which the Board approved the Terms of Reference. Future papers/minutes for Board meetings would also be sent to the Delivery Group and minutes from Delivery Group meetings would be sent to Board members to build and maintain links between the two groups. It was agreed that DF would attend future Board meetings to represent the Delivery Group. Looking ahead, some further change to the terms of reference were likely to be needed around accountable body issues.

ACTION: KS to update the Terms of Reference with the agreed changes.

ACTION: KS to send papers/minutes of Board meetings to the Delivery Group and send minutes of the Delivery Group to Board members.

ACTION: DF to represent the Delivery Group at Board meetings.

5. Funding/Resourcing the Partnership

JW thanked partners who had made funding commitments thus far, not least NYCC for their role in paying for the Partnership Officer post and the RFCC/EA for the levy contribution which had been recently approved. AM suggested that there might need to be a further discussion with civil servants about the priority afforded to the project in the LEP's Growth Fund bid. There was a brief discussion on the role that the Partnership could play in helping to secure future funding and the importance of making sure bids use language/hooks that will attract funders.

It was also recognised that while some organisations may not be able to contribute financially, they can provide significant in-house support to the Partnership such as design expertise, technical input etc. CM reminded the Board that interns could also be a useful resource for progressing individual pieces of work.

The extent to which the Partnership has a role to play in delivering hard engineering flood risk projects was also discussed. Whilst the Partnership sought primarily to focus on working with nature that could clearly be complimentary to engineered measures as was the case with the Slowing the Flow project. It was also noted that the Government had not fully allocated all the money agreed in response to the Boxing Day floods of 2015. Although they might in practice become oversubscribed an ambition could be to develop a case for securing some of that money for the Derwent catchment. Summing up JW thanked those partners who have already contributed. The Delivery Group would work the budget up in more detail. JW would continue funding conversations including with DEFRA officials.

ACTION: Delivery Group to do detailed budget

ACTION: JW to continue funding discussions

6. Partnership Communications

The Board discussed the paper, tabled at the meeting. There was general consensus that there was no need to develop a dedicated website or logo yet, but to retain an on-line

presence via the EYRT website. RF offered support from NYCC in developing a brand and noted that this would be worth progressing so that when needed, it would be ready for use. It was noted that ideas for a logo may emerge from the outcome of the discussions on where individual partners see the greatest need for collaboration.

In the event of an incident, if the Partnership was asked to comment, this would be done via the Chair, in consultation with relevant partners. Some key messages could be agreed in advance to use if needed, but the partnership would not proactively issue press releases on particular topics at this stage.

7. Other business and Date of next meetings

KS asked Board members for suggestions of items for future meetings. The following topics were suggested:

- an overview of the catchment, issues and what projects/initiatives are already taking place on the Derwent;
- research into agri-food resilience → could bring an external speaker in
- feedback from other pilot projects relevant to the Partnership
- session from YWS on their work in relation to natural flood management.

IDB representation – there was a positive response to the suggestion of IDB involvement including possibly a representative on the Partnership Board.

ACTION: MS to contact Innes Thompson, Chief Executive of ADA, to discuss IDB involvement.

Karen Saunders – Partnership Officer
9th November 2016