

Herefordshire Climate and Nature Board

Minutes of meeting held 6.00-8.00pm – Tuesday 27th September 2022

Chair: Cllr Ellie Chowns (EC)

Attendees: Anna Darwood (AD), Jackie Jones(JJ), Richard Wells (RW), Elly Deacon-Smith(EDS), Stuart Brisbane(SB), Gordon Coppock (GC), Gareth Williams (GW), James Marsden (JM)

Herefordshire Council Support: Ben Boswell (BB), Richard Vaughan (RV)

Apologies: Kate Gathercole, Claire Kingston, Andrew Nixon, Ian Howie, Emily Partridge, Liz Duberley

1. Welcome

EC welcomed the Board.

Update on Board member(s)

Resignations have been received from Julia Cotton due to other commitments and Andrew Nixon who has moved on from the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust.

Jamie Ardsley could be invited to join the board in Andrews stead, Andrew also suggested his replacement at Herefordshire Wildlife Trust; Claire Spicer be approached.

The recruitment subgroup met 26.09.22 to consider who could fill Julia's vacant position with existing applicants considered against the below criteria:

- Gender balance
- Sectoral balance
- Skills

Whilst some applicants showed some promise none provided sufficient information to enable an appointment to be made. Instead the sub group decided that a new recruitment exercise should be run alongside a skills gap analysis of the existing board members. A number of previous applicants should be invited to submit applications if they were still interested in joining the board. The skills gap analysis will help inform the appointment of a board new member to fill the current vacancy as well as any future vacant positions.

Action - Skills matrix to be shared with the board to check all relevant skills represented.

Action – once complete, skills matrix shared for completion by board members.

Steve Klenk (SK) from Farm Herefordshire has provisionally agreed to join the Farming and Land Use Sub Group subject to a conversation to get a better understanding of the board as a whole.

Action – JM to discuss the board with SK

2. Minutes of the last meeting held 16th August 2022

- Matters Arising/ Actions
- The minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th August 2022 were agreed.

3. Board Reflection and Discussion

Cllr Chowns thanked the board for their commitment under this shared ambition and progress the board has made to date.

The board were asked to reflect on the past year as the board nears its one year anniversary, the following headings were used to frame the conversation.

What's going well?

What's challenging?

What's our vision?

How will we get there?

What's going well?

- The board is purpose driven by the vision.
- The people involved in the board, there is good diversity of sectors and perspectives and everyone contributes.
- Some good work has been done already including; Carbon workout guide for farmers, Give your garden a carbon workout, Carbon Workout Guide – how to become a climate champion and 30 for 2030 which offers energy audits.
- We have a baseline for county carbon¹ and are working on the baseline for nature rich.
- The countywide renewables survey specification is being developed and will be shortly ready to go to tender.
- Some good initial steps of helping the board understand what's going on in the council.
- The board meeting in person is helpful and very productive.

What's challenging?

- Delivering the very ambitious vision.
- Funding and resources to achieve the vision.
- Synching with other actions and projects that are going on across the county, it is important to avoid duplication of work.

¹ <https://zerocarbon.herefordshire.gov.uk/getting-the-county-to-net-zero/>

- Capability and level of engagement from the subgroups with respect to what can be suggested to inform funding that primarily goes through Herefordshire Council (e.g. Shared Prosperity Fund etc.).
- How to engage the county (and remain engaged) with what the board are doing.
- We don't hear about anyone talking about the work of the board – is Greener Footprints getting out there? Are we asking and listening to the community effectively?
- The board is yet to be entrenched in community and achieved enough to have a big event to celebrate this achievement (consideration to this given later in annual conference discussion).
- We don't have enough reach yet to be successful in mobilising people to own their own strategy to reach the vision.
- How to identify projects from the community and support them.
- Resource, each board members time inc. involvement with subgroup(s).
- The board is still in the 'shaping phase', there is a need to move to the 'delivery phase'. How can the board streamline things?

What's our vision?

- Net zero and nature rich by 2030.
- Building resilience for the county.
- Every building and every entity has a Greener Footprints sticker and owns their own plan to get towards the vision.
- The board doesn't debate the target but we focus our energy on practical actions on getting there.
- The board focusing on mobilising the county and the target is a guiding principle – building a shared narrative.
- The board empowers people to make a difference.
- An Enterprize Zone which is self-sufficient in energy.

How will we get there?

- One step at a time in addressing uncertainty and ambiguity of the vision.
- Empower sub groups to drive action in their areas.
- The partnership brings together everybody around the shared commitment and board catalyses this.
- Develop a pipeline of projects (a pipeline approach).
- Signposting to funding sources.
- Actively seek new funding sources.
- Work with groups like HGN to catalyse action.
- Facilitating a training package (that benefits the county) that goes beyond the Marches including training from NMITE on sustainable building/retrofit and renewables.
- 1 in 4 meetings in person (note for future - meeting in person early on is helpful).
- Inform a sufficient % of the population about the sensible steps people can make until the 'avalanche effect' takes over (critical mass) and it gains a life of its own. The board note the energy crisis is a catalyst and these conversations are happening.

- Need to promote opportunity to communicate with board, how can GF be the vehicle to do this?
- Need to move into doing phase (projects).
- Working with pension companies/energy companies the board could act as facilitators to join up this investment with local businesses/companies to facilitate capital in low carbon projects.
- Use/build demonstrator projects or events to use time effectively to reach critical mass (such as the farms visits).
- Remind people what has been achieved – celebrate success.

Action - BB to create a map of links between subgroups and council depts. as well as more broadly across the county the board then review where they can be most impactful (action for future meeting).

Action - develop the narrative/vision statement.

4. Annual Climate Conference Discussion

Who is the target audience? It is key that it is not the usual suspects i.e. preaching to the converted.

What is the hook – why will people give up their time to come? Note there is already a lot of events being advertised post Covid.

One theme could be managing business risk relating to the environment. The example was given of farmers needing the environment to flourish to enable them to continue to farm into the future.

What outcome do we want from the event? We want everyone in the county to own their own strategy (in line with the vision).

Is there potential to piggy back another event for our own as well as the attendee's efficiency?

5. AOB & Good News Items and Funding Opportunities

Hospital bid to Salix for £21m to reduce remaining 90% of their emissions (previously a 10% reduction in emissions was funded by Salix) by March 25, has been approved. This equates to c. 3100 tonnes saved (CO2e).

The Hospital is also restarting their sustainable committee which will be led by the chief executive. They are also looking to join 30 by 2030 project developed by the Herefordshire Climate and Nature Partnership board.

The Marches LEP Energy Fund has been awarded and the outcome is due to be announced on the 28.09.22.

6. County-wide action plans

Reminder to return updated actions plans to climate@herefordshire.gov.uk and please highlight changes.

7. Date/ Time of future Board Meetings & Agenda Items

- 1st November – 6.00 – 8.00 pm - Zoom