

Transitional Biosphere Board meeting

20 March 2015, 10am-12pm

Jurys Inn

Present:

Board Members

David Taylor (DT), Dean, College of Social Sciences, University of Brighton

Ben Earle, Water Efficiency Manager, Southern Water (BE)

Nicola Davies, Sussex Downs Team Manager, Natural England (ND)

Sean Ashworth, Deputy Chief Fisheries and Conservation Officer, Sussex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (SA)

Scott Marshall, Director for Economy, Adur & Worthing District Council (SM)

Liz Whitehead, Co-Director, Fabrica (LW)

Vic Borrill, Director, Brighton & Hove Food Partnership (VB)

Tom Scanlon, Director of Public Health, Brighton & Hove City Council (TS)

Chris Todd, Community Works (CT)

Paula Murray, Assistant Chief Executive, Brighton & Hove City Council (PM)

Eleanor Harris, Chief Executive, i360 (EH)

Guests/ Supporting Officers

Nick Hibberd, Head of City Regeneration, Brighton & Hove City Council (NH)

Sarah Jones, Senior Support Officer, Sustainability Team, Brighton & Hove City Council (SJ)

Rich Howorth, Biosphere Project Officer, Brighton and Lewes Downs Biosphere (RH)

Jan Jonker, Head of Strategy and Projects, Cityclean & Parks, Brighton & Hove City Council (JJ)

Apologies

Michael Farthing, Vice Chancellor, University of Sussex

Catherine Fuller, Sustainable Places Team Leader, Solent and South Downs, Environment Agency

Phil Belden, Head of Operations, South Downs National Park Authority

Catherine Kelly, Senior Lecturer (Human Geography), University of Greenwich

Julian Crampton, Vice Chancellor, University of Brighton

1. Welcome and Introductions

PM led Welcome and Introductions around the table. We noted the eclipse as an auspicious sign.

2. Biosphere Overview: Development and Implementation

RH presented an overview of the Biosphere to serve as an induction for Board members.

In answer to questions from the Board, RH confirmed that:

- Biosphere designation is subject to a 10 year 'periodic review' by UNESCO and informal progress updates every 6 months at UK Man and Biosphere (MAB) meetings.
- A key purpose of the Board is to ensure that we maintain our designation by overseeing delivery of Biosphere projects that fulfil the intentions of the UNESCO application and related Biosphere Management Strategy.
- RH confirmed that UNESCO will judge the success of the Biosphere against the commitments in our original application as assessed under the 10-yearly Periodic Review process.
- Link to 'Our Biosphere' video: <http://biospherehere.org.uk/resources/video/>
- Link to Biosphere Management Strategy and UNESCO Biosphere application: <http://biospherehere.org.uk/resources/>
- **Action: RH / PM to circulate the application with the minutes of this meeting.**

3. Potential Benefits

Scott Marshall: Economic Benefits

To support future investment in the visitor economy in Worthing and Adur, the council has developed a new visitor brand. There is a major gain to be had via the Biosphere in terms of tourism and this is very relevant or the whole of the designated area.

For their Local Plan they are producing a Supplementary Planning Document for green infrastructure, helping to deliver the Biosphere objectives and attract funding from the investor market.

They are also looking at introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy as a potential funding stream for Biosphere related environmental programmes.

SM recommended the inclusion of a local secondary school head teacher on the Board. CT recommended choosing the best person to reach out and engage other schools.

Action: Board members to recommend an Education representative to join the Board.

TS suggested extending the public health in schools programme to sustainability. He suggested the Board looks to incorporate sustainability objectives in the Public Health in Schools Programme.

Action: RH to follow up with Lydie Lawrence who commissions the programme.

Nick Hibberd: links between the Biosphere Board and the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB)

GBEB oversees a strategic agenda for economic growth in the Greater Brighton area which mirrors the Biosphere area. It is made up of public sector and business partners from the area.

NH took a paper to the last GBEB meeting setting out the importance of the Biosphere designation to sustainable economic growth in the region. The Board unanimously agreed to recognise the importance of the Biosphere and the links between GBEB and the Biosphere Board and **asked this group to develop a pipeline of projects to take to GBEB.**

Link to GBEB paper: report [http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000855/M00005399/\\$ADocPackPublic.pdf](http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000855/M00005399/$ADocPackPublic.pdf) [2.81mb download]. The paper is Item 34.

Action: SJ to circulate GBEB paper with notes of this meeting.

Liz Whitehead: Links to the cultural sector

LW presented on the value of culture to the environment and the Biosphere area in particular for attracting funding and artists and showed several interesting and inspiring examples to the Board.

Action: LW proposed that the Board develops a cultural strategy that local arts can use as a tool to deliver a commissioning programme. Artists will be attracted by projects that are part of the sustainability agenda.

LW stressed the importance of measuring impact and the question of how to do this sympathetically.

Action: LW committed to set up a 'God's Eye View' of the Biosphere Artist's Residency.

The Board agreed that we can develop the link between culture and our Biosphere area as one of our Unique Selling Points.

Vic Borrill: Public engagement and behaviour change

We need a simple and high profile message about what the Biosphere is to reach out to residents as well as visitors.

Behaviour change messages are also key for those who are already aware of the Biosphere and working within it.

It is important to:

- engage with grassroots groups; this requires outreach

- offer opportunities for schools and young people to engage.

VB noted the need for specialist involvement in the consultation and engagement process. Also the need to build in money in bids for communications and engagement work.

VB also noted risk of Biosphere being the answer to all questions around sustainability and the Board needs to prioritise delivery.

Eleanor Harris: Biosphere's potential as a visitor destination

EH recommended that Visit Brighton promotes the Biosphere giving it higher visibility, focusing on visits, events and learning; developing the existing website to promote.

Biosphere tours can include a wealth of venues from the i360 to The Waste House and Silo Restaurant, for example.

EH posed the potential for promotion of a bespoke Biosphere App which is already being considered.

Similar projects that we can learn from are: Eden project, Wakehurst Place, Kew Gardens, Sealife Centre.

4. Draft ToR

Board members agreed the following edits to the ToR:

Under Section 2: Culture as a Unique Selling Point to be added.

Under Section 2: State that the Board is responsible for maintaining the designation and responsible for delivering outcomes.

Under Section 2: Mention tourism bodies.

Under Section 2: Add Monitoring & Evaluation of Impact (supported by evidence needs)

Under Section 3: Add Water and Health as examples under first point?

Under Section 4: please reference Adur District Council (not Worthing).

Action: Board members to review the ToR with a view to getting them signed off within 2 weeks of receiving the minutes of the meeting.

5. Delivery Plan

Board members proposed the following edits to the Delivery Plan:

- Water Resources and Demand Reduction to be included.
- Measuring delivery to be included.

TS emphasised the importance of measuring impact being embedded into the project process.

Action: Board Members to review the Delivery Plan and feedback their recommendations.

RH recommended a Board substructure of 3 working groups each with a specific task-and-finish focus (**see attached document**): Nature Conservation; Sustainable Development; Knowledge, Learning and Awareness.

A Board Member would sit on each group.

Groups would decide on priorities to bring back to the Board.

CT flagged up the importance of policy development to influence Local Planning in the Biosphere.

Action: Board Members to review and confirm the structure.

Action: Working Groups to be established prior to next Board meeting

RH to sit on the Nature Conservation group.

Universities Board Members (UoB lead?) to sit on Knowledge, Learning and Awareness Group.

In response to a question, PM confirmed that the board would have the responsibility to prioritise resource against programmes.

CT sparked a discussion about the role of the Biosphere Board in leading debate and current thinking and being able to feed into policy development, e.g. housing, in a non-political manner. .

6. Membership & Scheduling Future Meetings

RH highlighted gaps in the current board membership list: 3rd sector in Lewes and Adur; schools and colleges.

It was agreed the Board will meet quarterly, with open sessions for other partners, interested organisations and the public as part of these twice a year.

The next 3 meetings will meet in Lewes, Adur and IFCA respectively.

Action: SJ to schedule dates for next 3 meetings.

7. Any Other Business

Action: PM will invite Board Members to Brighton Festival events in May via LW.