

Transitional Biosphere Board meeting

20 July 2015, 10am-12pm

Lewes District Council, Southover House

Present:

Board Members

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

Martin Randall, Director for Economy, Adur & Worthing District Council (SM)

Liz Whitehead, Co-Director, Fabrica (LW)

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

Chris Todd, Community Works (CT)

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

Eleanor Harris, Chief Executive, i360 (EH)

Michael Farthing, Vice Chancellor, University of Sussex (MF)

Phil Belden, Director of Operations, South Downs National Park Authority (PB)

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

Gillian Marston, Director of Service Delivery, Lewes District Council (GM)

Catherine Tonge, Sussex Downs Team, Natural England (CTo)

Chris Tomlinson, Rampion Delivery Manager, eon (CTm)

Paul Atkins, Plumpton College (PA)

James Farrell, Sustainable Places Team Leader, Solent & South Downs, Environment Agency (JF)

Laura Coleman, Director, ONCA (LC)

Guests and Supporting Officers

Rachel Williams, Sustainability & International Programme Manager (RW)

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

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

Ben Earle, Water Efficiency Manager, Southern Water

Nick Hibberd, Head of City Regeneration, Brighton & Hove City Council

Andrew Lloyd, Dean, University of Brighton

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

Action Log

Action	Lead	Status
Board members to recommend an Education representative to join the Board, specifically looking for a representative from the Adur and Worthing area.	MR	MR to identify and approach rep
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	Ongoing
Board Members to review the Delivery Plan and feedback their recommendations.	All	Ongoing
PB to circulate weblink to the draft SDNPA Local Plan to Board Members.	PB	New
Response from the Biosphere Board to SDNPA Consultation to be an agenda item at 29.09.15 Board meeting	SJ	New
JF offered to circulate Environment Agency's new Corporate Strategy to Board Members.	JF	New
MR offered to circulate information on Community	MR	New

Infrastructure Levy to Board members.		
MR to schedule a meeting on funding opportunities raised by Community Infrastructure Levy for Biosphere green infrastructure projects.	MR	New
SJ to look into file sharing site to accessible to all partners.	SJ	New
Agenda item for next SDWG meeting on Housing Development.	SJ	New
Explore opportunities for umbrella branding and digital tourism guide. Broader meeting with relevant members of wider partnership (e.g. tourism reps) to be organised.	PM	New
Developing a consumer awareness campaign on local sustainable fisheries involving IFCA and Food Partnership; to be included as an agenda item at the next Sussex Marine and Coastal Forum (SMACF) meeting.	SA	New
It was agreed that a piece of work would be done on local sustainable fisheries.	SA; VB	New
Plan session for understanding alignment of resources amongst Biosphere partners – either for workshop or as part of next Board	JF; PM	New
Suggestions from Board Members please for a venue for the December Partnership Meeting that will hold 50-60 people.	All	New

1. Welcome and Introductions

PM led Welcome and Introductions around the table. PM advised that three Board members had stepped down and would be replaced. These were: Tom Scanlon who would be replaced by Emma Robinson and Katie Cumings; Des Lambert of Plumpton College who was replaced by Paul Atkins; and Scott Marshall who was replaced by Martin Randall.

2. Actions from last meeting

RH / PM to circulate the Biosphere application with the minutes of the last meeting. This was done.

Board members to recommend an Education representative to join the Board, specifically looking for a representative from the Adur and Worthing area. Carried over.

RH to contact Lydie Lawrence to discuss incorporating sustainability in the Public Health in Schools Programme. This was done.

SJ to circulate GBEB paper setting out the importance of the Biosphere designation to sustainable economic growth in the region. This was done.

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. In progress.

Board members to review the ToR with a view to getting them signed off within 2 weeks of receiving the minutes of the meeting. Board members accepted draft ToR that was circulated after the 20.03.15 meeting.

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

Board Members to review and confirm the proposed Board structure. Agreed.

Working Groups to be established prior to next Board meeting. This was done: Sustainable Development and Nature Conservation groups had met; Knowledge, Learning and Awareness group scheduled to have its first meeting in September 2015.

SJ to schedule dates for next 3 meetings. This was done.

PM will invite Board Members to Brighton Festival events in May via LW. This was done.

3. Updates from Board Members

Dawn Chorus event at Fabrica had over 19,000 visitors, with additional numbers visiting the Gauge event.

PM chaired a partnership meeting at Fabrica with a private view that was well attended. It was agreed at that meeting that two Partnership meetings would be held per year to discuss the wider Partnership work. The next Partnership meeting will be held in December, with date and details to be confirmed. Chair expressed her hope to see the Partnership grow.

PM, JJ and RH had met with Des Lambert of Plumpton College to discuss the role of Plumpton in the Biosphere including a potential education centre at Stanmer and a much closer working relationship in terms of Plumpton's current activities. The meeting was very positive and firm plans were made.

EH reported that i360 has put in a planning application to modify the tower's energy generation technology: the plan for the wind turbine at the top of the tower has been replaced by a technology to capture energy via the pod descending the tower. EH reassured Board Members that this represented an increase in energy capture from 20% to 50%.

VB updated the Board on: the wellbeing benefits of the Racehill Orchard Project – more information is available on Brighton Food Partnership website here: <http://bhfood.org.uk/blog/an-apple-a-day>. The School Meals Team is planning a local sustainable 'Fish' theme for school dinners next academic year. SA offered to support on this.

PB asked Members to respond to the SDNPA consultation on the South Downs Local Plan, which is due to start in September. **Action: PB to provide web link to the draft plan to Board Members.** The web link was provided by PB and is here: http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/NPA_2015July16-Agenda-Item-7-Appendix-1.pdf. Chair suggested we e-mail round issues of common interest and consider a response from the Biosphere Board at the next Biosphere meeting. **Action: SJ to add this item to the agenda for the 29 September meeting.**

JF advised that Environment Agency is refreshing priorities in the area of staff engagement; their corporate strategy is being refreshed with the appointment of a new Chief Executive. **Action: JF offered to circulate Environment Agency's new Corporate Strategy to Board Members.**

LC at her first meeting outlined the role of ONCA to Board members and gave some highlights and examples of the ongoing programme, including the Climate and Extinction educational programme running from September to December 2015.

PA confirmed that Des Lambert of Plumpton College is retiring and he is replacing him.

MR advised that Adur and Worthing Council is working on branding and is keen to connect with Biosphere.

MR advised that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is being launched in October by Adur and Worthing Council which could provide a source of funding for green infrastructure programmes and projects. **Action: MR offered to circulate information on CIL.**

MR confirmed that CIL could be used as a mechanism to get project ideas funded if project and development teams work in partnership from an early stage.

It was decided that the Sustainable Development Working Group could consider opportunities CIL raises for Biosphere projects. PB reminded the Board that some work had already been done on a potential pipeline of projects led by the National Park that might be relevant in this discussion. **Action: MR to schedule a meeting; invitees will include GM and PB.**

GM advised the board that Lewes District Council has produced new videos on its local greenspace with Plumpton College. Board Members looked forward to viewing this when launched online.

LW updated the Board on the promotion of Biosphere events, as well as RSPB at the Dawn Chorus and Gauge events at Fabrica.

RH reported that 1800 people had signed up as Friends of Biosphere to date. Guest blogs were now a feature of the Biosphere website and the monthly e-newsletter; RH invited those Board members interested in taking part by writing a blog to let him know. The Railway Land Festival took place in July in Lewes and was the annual Biosphere festival event. It raised the profile of the Biosphere and its local connection with Lewes. RH had attended the Euromab UNESCO meeting in May and found it an excellent networking event.

RH also raised the issue of the role of the Board in formally monitoring the action plan of delivery on the Biosphere objectives and the formal responsibility through to UNESCO. It was agreed that a regular update report would go to Board members who would then raise items for discussion by exception. The first of these reports would be circulated to Board Members with these minutes. GM suggested that 'Impact' and 'Change Achieved' should also be factored into the monitoring of the action plan in preparation for the more radical assessment that would accompany any extension to Biosphere status which takes place every 10 years.

Public documents can be made available on the Biosphere website; Board Members discussed options for accessing documents not in the public domain. **Action: SJ to look into file sharing site to accessible to all partners.**

JJ advised that the Biosphere is prominent in Brighton & Hove City Council's new Corporate Plan and that there is a commitment to the Biosphere from the new administration. The Stanmer Park Heritage Lottery Fund Grant application to restore the walled garden had been successful and the project had received positive feedback from the LEP; the Home Farm historic farm complex was also a subject of the bid. JJ will keep members updated on progress.

JF advised that Brighton & Hove Building Green had input to Volks Railway's development bid on a range of improvements including the vegetation on the embankments. A decision is expected in September 2015.

4. Working Groups

Knowledge Learning and Awareness

The Group have scheduled their first meeting for 16 September. The Group will be led by University of Brighton and the meeting will be held there. The core focus will be on developing a research plan in partnership with Plumpton College and the University of Sussex.

Sustainable Development

Summary notes had been circulated of the first meeting which took place on 23 June.

CT had been in discussion with Rachael Durrant of University of Sussex to identify opportunities in research and engagement for developing housing accommodation; they felt Biosphere could be used for more education to raise awareness of sustainable development, to influence future city plans across the area. MR noted that there are case studies of development within sustainable communities that are worthy of research. **Action: Agenda item for next SDWG meeting on Housing Development.**

The Board saw a presentation of the [Wild Atlantic Way Facebook page](#) and CK briefed members on the project. This was felt at the sub group to be a useful potential structure for the Board to consider as an option for fundraising and development.

Possible funding streams identified were from Visit Britain and European funds; PB gave the example of the National Trust and how it can highlight existing features under the SDNP umbrella brand.

EH highlighted the challenge of resourcing such a project, however felt that we could 'piggy back' the technology already established by Brighton Museum's App.

CT asked how Biosphere and BHCC branding meshed with wider branding; PB advised that SDNP uses an umbrella 'visual' identity. GM raised issue that partners would still have their own branding and thought would need to be given to how the different brands would all fit together.

Action: There was general agreement to explore opportunities for similar approach for the Biosphere. Broader meeting with relevant members of wider partnership (e.g. tourism reps) to be organised.

Nature Conservation

Summary notes had been circulated of the first meeting which took place on 23 June. The main actions were:

To improve the environmental knowledge base linking both land and sea habitats and their provision of ecosystem services, in order to better identify and inform practical improvement projects such as chalk downland habitat creation.

A common interest was identified in developing a consumer awareness campaign on local sustainable fisheries. **SA agreed to discuss as an agenda item at the next Sussex Marine and Coastal Forum (SMACF) meeting.**

It was agreed that a piece of work would be done on local sustainable fisheries involving IFCA and Food Partnership.

5. Resourcing

RH updated members on current funded projects and bids in the pipeline. This presentation would be circulated with these minutes.

It was agreed that the priority is to bring together Board Members' sustainability initiatives to avoid duplication and consolidate effort.

Chair's suggestion that Resource and Funding Opportunities be a standing agenda item was agreed.

MR proposed pooling bidding resources; and offered some support from the new investment officer within his Directorate at Adur & Worthing District Council. RW added that Brighton & Hove City Council International Team is available to support organisations across the city with their in-depth knowledge of EU funding streams. Current opportunities include:

- Channel Interreg Programme: cultural and natural heritage strand. This is a 7 year programme.
- Approx £0.5m in European EAFRD funding through Coast to Capital LEP with support for destination marketing for rural tourism.

JF suggested a workshop session to review our staff resources with a view to getting a sense of how efforts and resources already aligned in terms of the Biosphere agenda and how they could work more closely together. This was agreed as an excellent idea and the **Chair agreed to work with JF to consider how that might be run and structured potentially at the next Board meeting.**

6. AOB

People Environment & Achievement Awards is a public event that will be held in Brighton on 03.10.15. A new Biodiversity Category will be sponsored by Big Nature with input from RH for our Biosphere.

Date of the next Board meeting is 29 September, 2pm-4pm @ Worthing Town Hall.