



## River Severn Partnership

### Minutes and Actions

8<sup>th</sup> September 2020

<b>Attendees:</b>	
<p><b>Environment Agency</b>          Hayley Deighton (Programme Manager)          Roy Stokes- Manager          Adam Lines- Place Manager, Shropshire and Telford          David Hudson- Place Manager, Gloucestershire and Warwickshire          David Edwards- Partnerships and Strategic Overview Team Leader, Shropshire and Worcestershire          Amy Leathard- Growth and Prosperity Advisor</p> <p><b>Worcestershire County Council</b>          Emily Barker- Planning Services Manager          Penny Unwin- OPE Manager</p> <p><b>Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils</b>          Holly Jones- Director of Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p><b>Telford and Wrekin Council</b>          Dean Sargeant- Director Neighborhoods and Enforcement Services          Gareth Pegg- Group Manager Engineering and Delivery          Lucinda Lycett- Flood Risk Manager          Gavin Ashford- Planning Manager</p> <p><b>Water Resources West</b>          Richard Blackwell</p> <p><b>Natural Resources Wales</b>          Gillian Wells</p> <p><b>Wildlife Trust rep</b>          Colin Preston          Roger Mortlock</p> <p><b>LNP Rep</b>          Matt Whitney</p>	<p><b>Shropshire Council</b>          Mark Barrow: Exec Director of Place (joint chair)</p> <p><b>Herefordshire Council</b>          Roger Allonby- Head of Economic Development</p> <p><b>Wyre Forest District Council</b>          Mike Parker- Director of Planning and Regulatory Services</p> <p><b>Worcester City Council</b>          Philippa Smith- Deputy Director Economic Development and Planning</p> <p><b>Gloucestershire County Council</b>          James Blockley- Flood Risk Manager</p> <p><b>Gloucester City Council</b>          Ian Edwards- Director of Place</p> <p><b>Severn Trent Water</b>          Marcus O’Kane- Water Resources Strategy Lead</p> <p><b>Severn Rivers Trust</b>          Mike Morris</p> <p><b>Natural England</b>          Emma Johnson</p> <p><b>Marches LEP</b>          Gill Hamer</p> <p><b>Worcestershire LEP</b>          Luke Willetts</p> <p><b>Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP</b>          Christian Sayer</p> <p><b>NFU</b>          Robert Newbery- Regional Director</p> <p><b>National Trust</b>          Andy Beer- Regional Director</p>
<b>Apologies:</b> Rob Weaver (Tewkesbury), Mike Grimes (EA)	
<b>Guests:</b> Alex Lane (Jacobs), Richard Dinsdale (MACE)	

#### 1. Welcome

Remote Teams meeting opened by Chair and attendees welcomed.

Update provided on EA Chair, Mike Grimes, and movement to a national assignment role. EA internal recruitment underway to appoint new Assistant Director who will pick up joint chair role as a priority when in post over next couple of weeks.

Hayley provided update on work with EA national colleagues on Adaptive Pathway Plan monies available this year to build on Partnership momentum and commence work. This will assist with early work ahead of receipt of £1.5million Adaptive Pathway monies in April 2021. Awaiting national confirmation next week which will enable the Partnership to commence commissioning of work and appointment of dedicated engagement resource.

Early work is also underway to build a Partnership website to ensure we have a collective space to share our messages and a forward plan of meetings. A Partnership email address has also been established to help coordinate engagement  
[RiverSevernPartnership@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:RiverSevernPartnership@environment-agency.gov.uk)

## **2. Developing the short term programme**

Hayley set out the next steps for the Partnership to build the programme of work. The commission with Jacobs and MACE has been extended to assist the Partnership in pulling together projects and aspirations across the partner organisations and to assess all ideas against a Partnership prioritisation matrix. This will help build understanding of areas of focus for now, soon and later and identify the most appropriate funding and delivery mechanisms.

Alex Lane from Jacobs provided an overview of the 'ask' to the Partnership. All agreed that the 25<sup>th</sup> Sept deadline was realistic. The aim is to understand all the projects and priorities across the geography and where the Partnership can add value in terms of removing blockages, accelerating and providing efficiencies in delivery, reviewing scopes and aligning across organizations' to provide the multiplier effect in terms of benefits and/or providing new investment and delivery mechanisms.

Clarification was provided on the request for partners to put forward all project ideas to assist in understanding what fits within the short term programme and what may need further consideration in the Adaptive Pathway Plan up to 2100.

Partners discussed other funding available to each of the partner organization's such as the Green Recovery Fund and some Ofwat Innovation funding. The Partnership considered how it uses all the various strengths across the different partner organization's to access different investment streams. Mark Barrow set out interest from Homes England who are keen to become involved in the Partnership. They are developing a future £41 billion Strategic Housing Infrastructure Fund to invest in infrastructure and there is potential to explore how this could align with the Partnership's ambitions and programme.

The pulling together of the programme by Jacobs and MACE will assist as we will be able to translate the list of projects into funding routes and partner support. This will then be mapped to provide complete overview of projects and ambitions across the area.

In the meantime partner organisations agreed to come together to form relevant clusters and pull together submissions as needed with the first focus being the Green Recovery Fund.

**ACTION  
ACTION**

**ALL to complete project proforma by 25<sup>th</sup> September and return to Hayley  
eNGOS to come together quickly to discuss the Green Recovery Fund and  
opportunities aligned with the Partnership vision.**

### **Innovative Resilience Programme**

An email briefing on this fund has now been circulated to LAs. Hayley circulated initial project thoughts from the LLFAs prior to the meeting. Some common themes are emerging around Regional Park ambitions across Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Shropshire, and how it aligns with issues around HRA linked to planning, nature recovery networks etc. It was agreed that this needed a focused conversation across the Partnership.

The Partnership also discussed opportunities around technology and issues linked to Development Management and CSO spills. The completion of the project proformas should hopefully start to develop some of these ideas and form the basis of what the Partnership agrees as a priority to put forward as an EOI in the Autumn.

- ACTION** All to let Hayley know who is wanting to be involved in a focused conversation around the nature recovery networks and regional park concept and Hayley to set up a focus group meeting.
- ACTION** All asked to develop thinking on initial ideas that have been circulated.
- ACTION** Hayley to chase LLFAs that have not yet shared thinking and distribute full set of ideas to Partnership to enable discussion on common themes and areas for further targeted engagement with Jacobs support.

### **Accelerated Project Delivery Update**

Mark Barrow provided an update on the Shrewsbury water management and North West Relief Road scheme. A Cabinet paper has been prepared and Cabinet meeting took place on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> Sept which gained unanimous support and marks the commencement of targeted engagement.

Dave Edwards provided an update on the Tenbury Wells flood scheme which is on similar timescales in terms of commencement by Q4 2021. A Strategic Outline Case will be available in the next 4 weeks and a meeting took place with the MP, County Council, District and Town Council on 4<sup>th</sup> Sept to discuss the project.

Alan Jones was unfortunately not available for the meeting but Colin Preston provided an update on the £5.4million carbon offsetting monies. Alan is working with the Wildlife Trusts and National Trust to pull together a work programme for tree planting and wetland creation linked to offsetting the 6 year flood risk infrastructure programme. It is recognized that the ministerial announcement around this money linked it to the work of the River Severn Partnership and there is therefore a need to bring the current work programme into the Partnership and look at potential for expanding and added value. Hayley had previously circulated some ToR for a thematic delivery group and asked all to confirm involvement in this group.

- ACTION** Hayley to speak to Alan Jones about the current work programme and bringing it to the Partnership and set up meeting for thematic delivery group

### **Natural Capital Mapping**

Matt Whitney, Gloucestershire LNP Manager provided the Partnership with a presentation on the natural capital mapping work that has been undertaken for Gloucestershire.

Marcus O’Kane flagged that this is an area of work that the Partnership can quickly develop to add real value. Work across Severn Trent Water, Water Resources West and the Severn

to Thames transfer all have separate needs within them to consider natural capital and biodiversity gain and there is therefore a real opportunity through the Partnership to bring this together and collaborate across partner organizations to build mapping and identify opportunities taking the system thinking approach. Severn Trent Water have resources to collaborate on this.

The Partnership agreed that it wanted to move forward with this work area and extend Gloucestershire work to cover the whole Partnership area.

NFU highlighted that it is important for mapping to overlay information about farming systems and current land use to ensure recognition is given to the strategic importance of current land use before making policy decisions about potentially changing its use, or making it less suited to food production.

- ACTION Hayley to work with Matt Whitney on scope of works and set up working group on holistic mapping for the Partnership to take forward NC work**  
**ACTION Matt to share presentation slides with the Partnership.**

**Work Programme and Governance**

Hayley updated the Partnership on the series of proposed workshops that are planned within each geography between now and mid October to help build the Partnership work programme and ensure widespread external engagement across the geography. Unfortunately numbers are limited due to having to run the sessions remotely but all outputs will be shared and there is opportunity for more detailed follow up on key themes.

Hayley set out the EA national conversations and establishment of an advisory group within the Partnership governance to bring together a group of leads across the EA departments. This will provide a sounding board for the Partnership as it moves forward to test integrated approaches and new policy and delivery mechanisms. The group will meet 6 weekly to coincide with the Partnership Programme Board. In addition, DEFRA policy leads have requested monthly calls to update them on Partnership progress.

Mark Barrow highlighted the devolution work that is ongoing and the Partnership agreed that it did not currently want to enter into this space as it would cause confusion.

Hayley highlighted conversations that were taking place with Midlands Connect and alignment to the Partnership particularly focusing around the A46.

***Date of next meeting- 3<sup>rd</sup> November***

**Actions Noted**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Complete Partnership Proforma	ALL	25 <sup>th</sup> Sept
eNGOs to set up meeting on Green Recovery Fund	Mike Morris/Andy Beer	Now planned for 18 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Confirm to Hayley involvement in regional park and nature recovery discussion	ALL	14 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Set up focus discussion on nature recovery networks	Hayley	18 <sup>th</sup> Sept

Chase LLFAs and share Innovation Resilience Programme ideas to identify cross cutting themes	Hayley	21 <sup>st</sup> Sept
Confirm to Hayley involvement in carbon offsetting delivery group	ALL	14 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Set up first meeting of carbon offsetting group to include Alan Jones and the work programme he is developing	Hayley	18 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Develop scope of works for Natural Capital aping work	Matt Whiney/Hayley	25 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Confirm to Hayley involvement in holistic mapping working group	ALL	14 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Set up mapping working group	Hayley	18 <sup>th</sup> Sept
<b>OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM JULY MEETING</b>		
Identify Warwickshire partner representative	Mark Barrow	
Circulate final Investment Plan	Hayley	
Set up Partnership Sharepoint	Hayley	
Identify PMO resources and skills	ALL	
Set out local leadership overview	Rob Weaver	