

# River Severn Partnership - meeting minutes

River Severn Partnership Strategic Board. 07/01/2020.

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**Attendees:** Mike Grimes (EA), Mark Barrow (Shropshire), Hayley Deighton (EA), Alex Thompson (EA), James Blockley (Gloucestershire), Richard Blackwell (Water Resources West), David Preston (EA), David Hudson (EA), Katie Jenkins (GFirstLEP) Rob Weaver (Tewkesbury), Roy Stokes (EA), Vic Allison (Wychavon), , Lucinda Lycett (Telford & Wrekin) , Philippa Smith (Worcester City), Adam Lines (EA), Martin Cox (NRW), Luke Willetts (Worcestershire LEP), Emily Barker (Worcestershire County), Matt Maginnis (Worcestershire County), Hayley Owen (Shropshire), Richard Osbourne (North Worcestershire Water Management)

Apologies: Gill Hamer (Marches LEP)

## Housekeeping, Welcome, Apologies, Agree Agenda – Mark Barrow

### MB – welcome and round table introduction

Hayley Deighton	Introduction presentation on the River Severn Partnership – where the work has developed from, aims of the partnership, investment drivers (sector based growth and water needs, existing commercial and residential properties at flood risk, IMD and flood risk areas, resilient infrastructure- road and rail connectivity and revenue costs associated with flood management and future climate change predictions of 850mm increase in peak flows)	
Hayley Deighton OPE updated	<p><b>Progress so far</b></p> <p>EA investment already being spent on updating the hydraulic model for the River Severn (Shrewsbury-Tewkesbury). Additional investment is needed to expand this for the full length of the River and to include the main tributaries- Teme and Warwickshire Avon.</p> <p>In addition, investment needed to undertake optioneering along the length of the River Corridor and to build in economic, social and environmental benefits appraisal work to understand the benefits</p>	<p>Action (All, deadline Feb 29th) - feedback on OPE funding option. Comments and thoughts on PID.</p> <p>Action (EA) - link work to national colleagues</p>

	<p>of strategic water management at a catchment scale.</p> <p>OPE bidding – Delayed due to election</p> <p>3 options for OPE monies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Top Slice- Cabinet Office discussions ongoing</li> <li>2) 3 separate bids from county partners along the partnership area (Shropshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire)</li> <li>3) Single Partnership bid led by one partner on behalf of the others.</li> </ol> <p>Feedback from OPE so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Need more clarity on public sector land involved and potential</li> <li>● Link into EA national leads</li> <li>● How does revenue from the OPE bid unlock capital</li> </ul> <p>Deadline for expected OPE Feb/March but awaiting feedback from Cabinet Office.</p>	<p>Action (Shropshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire) – to share OPE leads with EA</p>
<p>Open Discussion</p>	<p>Potential need and value in establishing a high level overarching group with leads from each organisation and senior sponsor.</p> <p>Need for additional conversations surrounding Wales and Welsh Authorities. Welsh interest must be recognised including the political sensitivity of growth and water resources.</p> <p>All Partners to create key contacts network for RSP.</p> <p>Aim to highlight RSP work to ministers linked to 11<sup>th</sup> March budget announcement.</p> <p>The focus must be on sustainable management of WR rather than a single issue programme.</p> <p>Modelling high flows is a good foundation upon which other work can follow. Particular focus on low flow (interdependence with Severn Regulation) but also to better understand impacts and opportunities – for example wetland benefit to offset flood risk and also provide support to base flows, modelling input assumptions must also align with what water</p>	<p>Action (All) – identify potential candidates for high level group- likely to be Council Leaders</p> <p>Action (EA) find DEFRA lead</p> <p>Mike Grimes (Emma Howard Boyd contact)</p> <p>Action NRW to pick up conversation with Mid Wales and link to HD</p> <p>Action (All) send list of key contacts to build RSP network. Partners to send</p>

	<p>companies are using for their regional planning purposes.</p> <p>Opportunity for regional water resources planning to support and help shape this work.</p> <p>There was discussion on expectation management. The flood model on its own will not provide all the answers and more work will be required – particularly in relation to ecological impacts and opportunities. This is also linked to broader socioeconomic benefits and need to apply a catchment approach.</p> <p>Water Resources West group of water companies are currently progressing ecology work on the Severn catchment which can support this work.</p> <p>The core membership requires review. DP queried why NFU were not invited. There was clear opportunity for farming sector to support these ambitions if applied with appropriate policy.</p> <p>The climate emergency was discussed and need to do more. DP explained that options like wetlands could provide more benefit in terms of carbon resequencing and deserves further review.</p> <p>More focus needed on stakeholder engagement that's needs to be timely and well resourced. DP stated the regional group of water companies could be well placed to support this.</p>	<p>contact details to HD</p>
<p>Hayley Owen/ Emily Barker/ James Blockley</p>	<p><b>Update on Cabinet papers</b></p> <p>Shropshire – Well received and unanimously supported.</p> <p>Worcestershire – went to corporate strategy programme and Portfolio Holders have been briefed. Partnership was agreed in principle. Once fully understand costs and benefits will have to go back to the board to secure monies.</p> <p>Gloucestershire – went to strategic board well received and unanimously accepted -contribution for 33k is fully approved.</p>	

	<p><b>MOU</b></p> <p>Additions of specifics around innovation, cross border connection needed. Request to detail all individual partners involved.</p>	<p>Action (EA) – Add districts to annex</p>
	<p><b>Next Step – Programme of Work</b></p> <p>What’s the River Severn Partnership primary objective? – Water management for X.</p> <p>Workshops used to steer answer to the above. Shropshire workshop planned 20<sup>th</sup> Jan with Worcestershire and Gloucestershire proposed for February.</p> <p>Need to align with work of Water Resources West around low flows and environmental optioneering.</p> <p>Following the workshops, need to agree primary and secondary objectives across the partnership, any trade-offs and develop a clear framework for commissioning.</p> <p>Virtual Team needed to help progress the work.</p> <p>Quarterly meetings agreed for Strategic Board. Next meeting April 2020.</p>	<p>Action (EA&amp;NRW) Workshops in each geography</p> <p>Dave Preston/Richard Blackwell and HD to discuss</p> <p>All to send lead contacts to HD for virtual team</p> <p>HD to confirm next meeting date</p>