

LNRS Advisory Board Board Meeting Minutes & Actions

Date: 5th June 2024 12:30-2.00

Venue: Via Teams

Attendees:

Gideon Ben-Tovim (Chair)	GBT	Nature Connected
Rachel Thomas	RT	National Trust
Rachel Waggett	RW	LCR CA
Judy Clavey	JC	Forestry Commission
Emma Galbraith	EG	LCR CA
Andrea O'Connor	AC	Sefton Council
Elina-Marielle Doss	ED	BioBank
Thomas Smart	TS	Liverpool University
Michelle Whalley	MW	Nature Connected
David Davitt	DD	Riverside Housing
Adam Briggs	AB	NFU
Joanne Doolin	JD	MEAS
Esther Taylor	ET	UUPLC

I Welcome / Introductions

The meeting began with a welcome to all participants. Each attendee was introduced, and their presence acknowledged.

2) Minutes from the previous meeting.

These were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting, with a note that in the NE presentation delivered in the previous meeting, under environmental outcomes – the target for increasing for woodland cover was not shown - can this be added to the information going forward.

3) Priority list update & feedback from the technical panel – Jo Doolin MEAS

JD talked through the methodology of the work done so far to get to this stage, sharing information about;

- how MEAS had set up the species technical group,
- held two workshops both in person and online for both the public and experts.
- Developed the Longlist with combined research from record centres such as Biobank and local knowledge, – these longlists were then shortlisted accordance with the guidance from Natural England
- Once shortlisted – species and habitats were combined into assemblages and from this, this list of priorities was developed.
- In further developing these priorities, two main questions were considered –through both data research and input by experts
What does good look like? (aspirations)How do we get there? (measures)
- JD went on to discuss the scoring matrix which includes considerations such as contribution to national environment objectives and targets / restoring habitats access etc.
- JD then went through the matrix table to demonstrate how the priorities currently look (note this is not yet finalised)

Discussion -

Scoring – questions were asked around whether the higher scores are better – what is the maximum score?

JD responded the scoring itself is helpful but used as guidance rather than absolute.

It helps identify what habitats also help deliver on national objectives and co-benefits and whilst some habitats will tick more boxes than others, a balanced approach to the region will be taken and the area will be looked at as a whole–

TS discussed the national objectives tab which provides a useful checklist to ensure all environment benefits are being covered including national targets from environment act.

DD commented how inspiring and motivating the work was, and how the work is already providing a useful structure to help assess the estate – and how it might contribute to delivering the LNRS

AB– a lot of the high scoring priorities sit in farm land and therefore it needs to be reiterated that a positive relationship with farmers needed. In addition some of the measures on farm land could deliver against other priorities – could these be connected/ given more weight? JD responded that this will be taken into consideration when looking at measures.

4) Call for nature recovery opportunities & workshops – Emma Galbraith

EG shared information about the upcoming workshops – which will look at where the strategy priorities could be delivered across the region to achieve the ambitions of the LNRS (pins on maps)

These workshops will be held in Mann Island on the 7th June and the 21st June and information will be circulated.

There will also be an online call for nature recovery opportunities for both landowners and the public to submit suggestions.

Questions

AB asked the question around the public suggesting places for nature recovery on land which is not theirs -what implication could this have for the farmer/landowner. This needs to be very sensitively handled and landowners do need to be consulted with

EG responding that suggestions would be non binding and will not include designations – there will be no implications for farmers.

In addition before the strategy is published – opportunity areas can be removed if landowners are not happy with their land being represented on the map.

DD asked a question about how the process might work if Riverside housing do identify areas of land which could be used for habitat restoration. EG responded that the current part of the process is mapping the opportunities where potential work could take place and essentially have that information/options there if funding were to come forward.

5) Marine update – Thomas Smart - Natural England

TS provided an update around Marine – with key points and discussion highlighted in the slide below.


NRS Technical Advisory Panel meeting 5 Mersey Forest

22 May 2024 11:00 - 12:00

Considering marine issues in LNRs

Consideration of marine issues came up frequently in relevant 1-1 conversations. We thought it might be helpful to clarify the ask. The LNRs statutory guidance encourages:

...“Coastal local nature recovery strategies [-] to follow the relevant local authorities’ boundaries. This usually means extending into the inter tidal zone as far as low water, but can be further around river estuaries. Coastal responsible authorities should consider how to factor in neighbouring marine areas and plans in their strategies. Linking local nature recovery strategies and marine spatial planning would help to identify land management changes that could benefit the estuarine or marine zone. For example, by improving the quality of water leaving river systems or managing coastal erosion risks.”



We are, therefore, asking RAs not to extend their Local Habitat Map to include areas beyond the boundaries of the local authorities that their LNRs covers, or propose potential measures in their Statement of Biodiversity Priorities that focus on areas beyond their boundaries. Any such proposals are not underpinned by legislation and would not formally be part of the LNRs. This is an important consideration because obligations, such as the requirement on public authorities to “have regard” to LNRs, would not apply to proposals outside of the LNRs boundaries, and it is important that users of the finished strategies are as clear as possible about what is required of them.

We understand how important marine nature recovery is to coastal stakeholders, and that preparation of the LNRs has, in some cases, led to some detailed thinking about marine recovery priorities and opportunities. The LNRs is not the place to record these. However, if any such thinking is being done locally, we would be very keen to receive any suggestions and outputs. We will then pass them on to relevant colleagues in the MMO and wider Defra group, to feed into thinking on how spatial planning for marine nature recovery might develop in the future. Please get in contact with ourselves or David.Spray@marinemanagement.org.uk and Tara.Hooper@marinemanagement.org.uk from the MMO.

Sanderlings on the beach in Northumberland (credit: Natural England)

4) Green Crossings note– Elina-Marielle Doss – BioBank

Thank you to the Board for input into the potential green crossing sites.

The proformas have now been submitted – and will be circulated for information purposes. The Board will be kept informed of any decisions taken by Highways England.

5) AOB (All)

6) Date of next meeting - Thursday July 4th 2024. 12.30pm – 1.45pm

Action Log	Owner
Refresh the Green Paper for NHS in Cheshire Mersey, aligning it with national requirements.	DS / RW
PT to share with AC – inventory on publicly held date held by Crown Estate.	PT/AC
TS to update NE presentation to include woodland creation cover target	TS