

Agenda



Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership Board

Wednesday 8 March 2023 at 10.00 am

Moved to a remote meeting because of expected weather conditions

Contact: Matt Whitney, Local Nature Partnership Manager

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Members:

Richard Benwell

Dr Prue Addison

Camilla Burrow

Michelle Leek

Professor David Macdonald CBE

James Price

Councillor David Rouane

Ian Boll

Dr Rosie Rowe

Simon Smith

Chair

Environmental NGO representative

Environmental NGO representative

DEFRA family of organisations

University representative

Farming representative

Local Authority member representative

Local Authority officer representative

Health representative

National landscape body representative

In attendance:

Matt Whitney

Becky Chesshyre

Susan Harbour

Kevin Jacob

Steve Proud

Tim Coates

Local Nature Partnership Manager

Strategic Partnerships Communications Officer

Strategic Partnerships Manager

Senior Democratic Services Officer

Land Management Director, BBOWT

North East Cotswold Farmer Cluster
representative

AGENDA

1 Apologies, conflicts of interest, Chair's announcements, welcome guests 10:00

2 Introduction to Perdiswell Farm 10:15

3 Notes of the previous meeting (Pages 4 - 9) 10:10

To consider the notes of the previous meeting held on 7 December 2022.

4 Oxfordshire's current affairs updates (Verbal Report) 10:15

Members of the Board to update one another on key matters of importance relevant to the LNP arising since the previous meeting.

5 Progress, additional resources and future funding (Pages 10 - 19) 10:25

As the Local Nature Partnership nears the end of the first of its two years of secure funding, the LNP Manager has drafted a progress report for Local Authority stakeholders. It is felt appropriate to explore other sources of additional funding and resource.

The Board is asked to comment on the progress report and suggest ways to:

1. ensure continuation funding from Local Authorities and;
2. secure a more diverse funding settlement including from other sources.

6 Towards a Land Use Framework for Oxfordshire (Pages 20 - 23) 11:00

There are many competing demands being placed on land, including renewable energy, biofuels, nature, accessible greenspace, floodplains, trees, food production and housing. The Board is asked to consider if the Local Nature Partnership should support calls for the production of a Land Use Framework for Oxfordshire to reconcile these demands.

7 Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership Terms of Reference and membership (Pages 24 - 29) 11:30

This paper presents an update version of the OLNP Board Terms of Reference.

It also updates the Board on recruitment to replace the outgoing landowner representative and business representative.

Further, an additional Board member is proposed, with rationale provided for their membership.

8 Sub-groups update (Pages 30 - 37) 11:40

To consider an update on the work of the Local Nature Partnership subgroups, with a focus on the objectives of those groups. The report also seeks the Board's input on some questions of importance.

9 Any other business (Page 38) 11:55

Communications update
Finance update (attached)
DEFRA ELM convener opportunity

10 Dates of future meetings 12:00

To note the dates of future meetings set out below:

- 14 June 2023
- 13 September 2023
- 13 December 2023

Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership Board

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 DECEMBER 2022 AT 10.00 AM
WILLOW ROOM, CORNERSTONE ARTS CENTRE, 25 STATION ROAD,
DIDCOT, OX11 7NE

Present:

Members: Richard Benwell (Chair), Dr Prue Addison, Ian Boll, David Knight, Professor David Macdonald, James Price, David Rouane, Rosie Rowe and Simon Smith

Officers: Becky Chesshyre, (Communications Co-ordinator for the Oxfordshire Partnership), Susan Harbour, (Strategic Partnerships Manager, South and Vale Councils), Kevin Jacob (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Matt Whitney, (Local Nature Partnerships Manager)

10 Apologies, conflicts of interest and Chair's announcements

Apologies for absence were submitted by Giles Brockbank, Business representative and Michelle Leek, DEFRA family of organisations.

During the discussion of Agenda item four, James Price, David Knight and the Chair declared interests as set out in the minute for that item.

The Chair commented on the successful holding of the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership Forum on 12 October 2022 and he thanked Board members for all their contributions before and after the event. Since the Forum a lot of activity had taken place within the various subgroups to progress the various actions and workstreams discussed at the Forum, notwithstanding that work on the local nature recovery strategy was still awaiting a HM Government policy announcement.

Members of the Board and Officers present were asked to introduce themselves.

11 Notes of the previous meeting

The notes of the Board meeting held on 21 September 2022 were approved.

12 Oxfordshire's current affairs updates

Matt Whitney, Local Nature Partnership Manager provided a verbal update on current affairs and activity within the county which were relevant to the work of the LNP and which the LNP might wish to influence. This included a draft version of a 'calendar of influence' setting out consultation periods for various plans and strategies. The Board was informed that there would be a need to prioritise responses on key issues given the finite time and resources available.

To date, a response from the LNP had been made to the draft Oxford City Local Plan. It was expected that other Oxfordshire councils would be refreshing their local plans in the following 12 months.

ACTION: - LNP Manager to share the LNP response to Oxford City Local Plan consultation to all members of the Board.

It was suggested that in addition to the plans listed, there were two Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (AONB) Management Plans which could be included. It was also noted that consultation would shortly be commencing on the North Wessex Downs and Chiltern Nature Recovery Plans and that these should also be added to the calendar.

ACTION: - LNP Manager to add potential responses to the Cotswold AONB Management Plan, West Oxfordshire Issues and Options Consultation, North Wessex Downs and Chiltern Nature Recovery Plans to the calendar.

A discussion took place on how the LNP could best formulate future consultation responses and draft responses be shared. The Board was informed that a Policy Sub-Group was in development to draft responses and the Chair proposed that this group have delegated authority to draft responses on the Partnership's behalf, but that Board members be copied in on the responses if they so request. The often short periods in which responses had to be formulated were acknowledged, but it was also noted that having responses available as early as possible was of benefit to the wider group of LNP stakeholders.

AGREED:

- 1) That the Policy Sub-Group be delegated authority to make consultation responses on behalf of the LNP.
- 2) That the Board be copied in on those responses where Board members express a preference to do so.

The Board noted that although there would always be some variations in response reflecting the nature of individual consultations, it ought to be possible to work towards largely common responses in many areas which could help with the resource implications. The Board was also informed that it was intended to share position papers on the LNP's website once this was created.

It was suggested that whilst council Local Plans formed an important area for LNP influence, it was also important to consider seeking to influence council's Corporate Plans when they were reviewed as these set out the strategic direction and priorities for funding decisions of those organisations. The importance of also considering responses to other

consultations such as those relating to strategic highways, green infrastructure, and Active Travel was also highlighted.

ACTION:

1. LNP Manager to share LNP position papers on the LNP website when appropriate and possible to do so.
2. LNP Manager to include council corporate plans in the calendar of influence.

13 Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership approach to influencing policy

The Board considered a report which set out a number of suggested methods to progress the decision that the LNP should '*influence planning to ensure better outcomes for people and nature*'. The paper suggested that the LNP avoid campaigning, but that it work in a supportive and encouraging capacity and provide evidence, case studies and experience to influence local and strategic plans in Oxfordshire via the Policy subgroup. In introducing the report, Matt Whitney, asked the Board to agree an approach to two specific questions:

- 1) What policies and plans should the LNP try to influence?
- 2) What methods should the LNP employ?

In the Board's discussion reference was made to two major proposed developments which provided examples of the type of issues and challenges the LNP needed an agreed approach to in terms of if, and how, it sought to respond and influence policy more generally. These were the Botley West Solar Farm proposals and the South Abingdon reservoir.

James Price declared an interest related to the Botley West Solar Farm proposals on the grounds that he was a tenant farmer of some of the land within the site area.

David Knight declared an interest related to the Botley West proposals on the grounds that he was a member of a parish council and local resident near the development area.

The Chair declared an interest related to the Botley West proposals on the grounds that he was a former director of West Mill Solar, but that this company had not been involved in greenfield solar provision.

The Board noted there was an initial consultation response deadline of 15 December. The Board discussed whether the LNP should seek to take a view on issues relating to the impact of the proposals on landscape character. Arguments were put forward by various members of the Board for and against this, but on balance it was felt that the giving of a specific response on these grounds would be outside of the LNP's Terms of Reference and was not directly related to its aims.

. After further discussion, it was agreed that the focus of any questions or request for further information relating to Botley West should be based on the LNP priorities of biodiversity, natural capital, nature recovery, and people & nature.

ACTION:

- 1) That a response on the Botley West Solar Farm proposal initial consultation be drafted by the LNP Manager with input from the Policy subgroup.

- 2) That the Board be copied in on those responses where Board members express a preference to do so.

14 Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership Forum review

The Board considered a report which set out the results of a review of the inaugural Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership Forum which had taken place on 12 October 2022 and which set out in appendices outputs relating to the LNP priorities of natural capital investment, nature recovery and people & nature. Matt Whitney, Local Nature Partnership Manager summarised the report's key recommendations:

- That the main in person Forum event should be held on annual basis, but that separate topic based online Forum engagement events be organised as necessary
- That Didcot Civic Hall be the preferred venue for the 2023 event given its accessibility

In discussion, members of the Board referred to there being a cross over in membership between the LNP advisory groups and the wider Forum membership which was felt to be a positive in the delivery of the outputs of the Forum. The principle of an annual forum whilst allowing for the setting up of ad-hoc events was supported.

In terms of a future venue, it was felt that accessibility should be key criteria but also considering affordability. It was also suggested that the possibility of holding the meeting earlier in the year should be investigated taking into account the impact of the 2023 local government elections in May 2023.

ACTION:

- 1) That the LNP Forum be organised on annual basis but that separate topic based online Forum engagement events be organised as necessary.
- 2) That the feasibility of holding the Forum in late June 2023 or July 2023 be investigated.
- 3) That Didcot Civic Hall be the preferred venue for the 2023 event given its accessibility.

15 Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership membership changes

As set out in the report Matt Whitney, Local Nature Partnership Manager outlined that the Board was asked to approve the inclusion of a second local authority representative and associated changes to the Board's Terms of Reference including:

- Approve the change of Wild Oxfordshire representative
- Consider the most appropriate way to recruit a new landowner representative

In discussion, it was felt that the proposed change to the appointment from Wild Oxfordshire as one of the environmental Non-Governmental Organisations, (NGO) representatives on the Board should be communicated to NGOs generally so they were fully aware of it.

With regard to the recruitment of a new landowner representative, it was suggested that the Country Landowners Association, National Farmers Union, and Lady Jennifer Stringer as the previous representative should be approached for proposals.

At this point Ian Boll, Corporate Director, Cherwell District Council, left the meeting room for the duration of the discussion relating to the recommendation to add a second local authority representative to the Board.

The Board was informed that a rationale for the addition of a second officer representative from the local authority sector was that it provided an additional and alternate avenue of two-way communication and influence between the LNP and councils. Members of the Board supported the recommendation but suggested that in order to provide the most value added, the officer appointed should be of a senior level equivalent to Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Executive level.

ACTION:

- 1) That the addition of a second local authority representative to the Board be approved and that associated changes be made to the Board's Terms of Reference.
- 2) That the change in appointment from the Chair of Wild Oxfordshire to the Chief Executive of Wild Oxfordshire be approved.

At this point Ian Boll re-joined the meeting.

16 Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership Sub-groups update

The Board considered written updates for each of the LNP sub-groups as set out in the Agenda. The following points were highlighted.

Biodiversity Gain subgroup

Discussion had included debate around the optimum level of percentage biodiversity net gain (BNG) that should be sought through the planning process arising from development, and the impact of this rate on site viability, with a variety of views expressed within the subgroup. The need to be able to demonstrate a strong evidence base supporting a rate in excess of 10% was highlighted. Arising from the subgroup meeting, the Board was asked to consider how biodiversity net gain requirements could be linked to the wider Local Nature Recovery Strategy, (LNRS).

The Chair suggested that given the delays in HM Government guidance, now was not the time to link the BNG directly to the LNRS. In discussion, the consensus view of the Board was that notwithstanding the need to provide a strong evidence base, it is appropriate to go over and above the baseline figure of 10% BNG if real benefit was to be achieved.

The Board noted that the majority of cost to developers was incurred in reaching 10%, with the additional cost of reaching 20% shown by various studies to be relatively negligible. It was felt that supporting evidence of Oxfordshire's historical biodiversity depletion needed to be gathered. The wider position at a Southeast LNP (SENP) level also needed to be checked in order to minimise regional inequality.

Nature and Health subgroup

This group had considered feedback from the LNP Forum event on priority actions from the people and nature theme and information sharing. The case study of '*Flo's – the Place in the Park*' community hub, located within Florence Park in Oxford, had been shared to the subgroup as an example of what could be achieved by active volunteers in small urban areas to support the environment even with limited funding.

The Board noted the view of the subgroup that as it moved forward, the LNRS would be a key part of delivering the enablers to achieve the subgroup's overall objectives.

Other matters discussed by the subgroup included the need for high quality green spaces accessible to all and local authority design guides to facilitate this.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy subgroup

It was highlighted that the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, (DEFRA) had confirmed that now it aimed to roll out LNRS in April 2023 with associated secondary legislation and guidance expected before then. The Board noted that whilst DEFRA would make the final designation, the Future Oxfordshire Partnership had at its November meeting endorsed the position of Oxfordshire County Council becoming the LNRS responsible authority and that the County Council had itself subsequently agreed to this status.

17 Communications update

Becky Chesshyre, Communications Co-ordinator for the Oxfordshire Partnerships, updated the Board on matters relating to communications and publicity. It was noted that a key project was the development of an Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership website. Ways in which to maintain regular contact with interested individuals through channels such as a regular LNP newsletter were also being explored.

18 Any other business

Cotswold Dark Skies survey

It was agreed that further details of the project and survey should be shared to Board members by Simon Smith.

ACTION: Simon Smith to share details of the Dark Skies project with Board members.

19 Dates of future meetings

The dates of future meetings as set out in the Agenda were noted.

The meeting closed at 12.06 pm

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

Title:	Year One progress report
Author:	Matt Whitney
Date:	08/03/2023

Summary:

The Local Nature Partnership is nearing the end of its first year of funding, with one more year’s funding secure. It is appropriate to report progress to date to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. This can be considered the first step in securing continuation funding (which FOP cannot itself decide upon – the decision will be taken by each sovereign local authority). The LNP Manager has produced a DRAFT progress report for FOP, appended to this paper.

This paper also looks at alternative and additional sources of funding.

The Board is asked to:

Comment on progress of the partnership to date.

Suggest ways in which we might better make the case for continuation funding from local authority partners.

Propose ways to diversify and increase funding for the LNP.

In late 2021 Oxfordshire’s councils jointly agreed a funding package to support the county’s strategic partnerships – the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership, the Bus Partnership and the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership. Two years’ funding was agreed, which commenced in April 2022. Thus, OLNP is nearing the end of its first year of funding, with one more year’s funding secure.

It is therefore considered appropriate to report progress to date to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. This represents the first step in making the case for continuation funding (which FOP cannot itself decide upon – the decision will be taken by each sovereign local authority). The OLNP Manager has produced a DRAFT progress report for FOP, appended to this paper.

The report highlights the successes of OLNP to date. It concludes that Local Authority funding has been the key factor in achieving these successes. It articulates a risk analysis of continuing vs not continuing to fund OLNP.

The Board is asked to consider the detail presented in the report and comment on progress of the partnership to date. Board members are also asked to comment on

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

the presentation of the report, suggesting ways in which we might better make our case for continuation funding.

OLNP Manager hopes the report demonstrates good progress. However, it is felt that even more could be achieved with additional resource. Similarly, it is felt that Local Authority partners would like to see a diversified funding settlement.

Resource is being sought to further the aims of the Local Nature Partnership:

- Oxfordshire County Council will recruit a Local Nature Recovery Strategy Manager
- Oxfordshire County Council is seeking funding for a project officer to lead the LNP's Health and Nature work
- South and Vale District Council have submitted a funding bid for a project manager to enable nature-based carbon offsetting in Oxfordshire
- LNP Manager has supported a bid to fund research how equitably accessible greenspace is distributed in Oxfordshire

Additionally, the University is exploring on behalf of the LNP:

- the cost of delivering nature recovery in Oxfordshire
- the estimated potential size of the offsite biodiversity net gain market
- the historic nature losses caused by development in previous local plan periods (to support a policy requiring greater than 10% biodiversity net gain).

The Board is asked to propose ways to diversify and increase OLNP funding, especially core funding.

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

Appendix

DRAFT Local Nature Partnership Annual Report

Executive Summary

Oxfordshire has a long history of partnership working in the natural environment sector and good relationships exist between the main environmental charities, the Local Authorities, and other stakeholders such as OxLEP and the universities. However, changes to land management practices, land-use change including from new developments, and climate change have led to continued negative impacts on Oxfordshire's habitats and wildlife.

Nationally, nature is rising up the agenda for a number of reasons:

- increased understanding of the role of nature in supporting climate resilience (both mitigation and adaptation) and a healthy economy
- changes to land use planning legislation
- changes to agricultural funding, moving away from basic payments (via the Common Agricultural Policy) to a system of public money for public goods (Environmental Land Management scheme)
- growing recognition of the positive impact nature has on human health.

In response to this, stakeholders worked together to form the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership (OLNP). In recognition of the role this Partnership could play in supporting delivery of a number of aspects within the Strategic Vision, the Local Authorities provided funding for a partnership manager, for 22/23 and 23/24.

This report gives an overview of the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership and highlights progress so far. Of note is the work done to create a framework for natural capital investment in the county; support Local Authorities in preparing for mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain; and establishing six focussed working groups that enable partners to support one another delivering aspects of our aim and purpose.

The report also identifies key stakeholders and assesses the effectiveness of the governance and methods utilised by the partnership. It assesses risks involved with continuing or not continuing to fund the partnership.

We conclude that the partnership is strong and valuable and has successfully leveraged additional resources from a number of sources, but that it is in need of a continued, diversified and enlarged funding settlement in order to support nature's recovery in Oxfordshire.

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

National LNP Picture

Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) were conceived by DEFRA in the early 2010s with the aim to:

“Drive positive change in the local natural environment, taking a strategic view of the challenges and opportunities involved and identifying ways to manage it as a system for the benefit of nature, people and the economy.”

In effect, LNPs act to position nature as an enabler rather than a blocker; an asset to be nurtured and enhanced rather than a liability or risk to be managed. LNPs enable consideration of nature within different policy spheres, demonstrating the positive role of the natural environment for planning and development, economic growth, climate resilience and health & wellbeing. They often do this by taking a ‘natural capital’ approach, which values nature for its benefits not only to wildlife, but also for flood risk reduction, carbon sequestration, recreation, air pollutant removal and more.

Some small amount of seed funding was provided by central government to help establish LNPs but this quickly ran out in 2013. As such, there is now a patchy network across the country. Some counties have strong LNPs, fully funded and established for nearly a decade, whereas others have no LNP or a voluntary one managed entirely from within one partner organisation with no dedicated resource. In 2016 partners established an LNP in Oxfordshire but it was short lived. We consider this failure to be a result of a lack of support and backing from Local Authorities and an absence of strategic prioritisation.

Oxfordshire LNP establishment and governance

In 2020 partners began work in earnest to re-establish an LNP and, following much stakeholder engagement, funding was secured for 22/23 and 23/24 from the Local Authorities. In July 2022 Matt Whitney was appointed as LNP Manager and Richard Benwell as voluntary chair of the LNP board.



Figure 1 – Timeline to establishment of Oxford Local Nature Partnership

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OLNP is not constituted. Its informal governance structure can be seen in Figure 2. Hosting the OLN Manager within the Strategic Partnerships Team at South and Vale District Council enables good partnership working between and amongst the Local Authorities, as well as with the non-council partners. Whilst OLN doesn't formally report into the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP), good two-way communication has been establishing meaning FOP keeps abreast of LNP activities, and LNP can support FOP activities. The LNP manager is supported by a comms colleague and a democratic services colleague both of whom also support the FOP Manager and OIEP Manager.

Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership

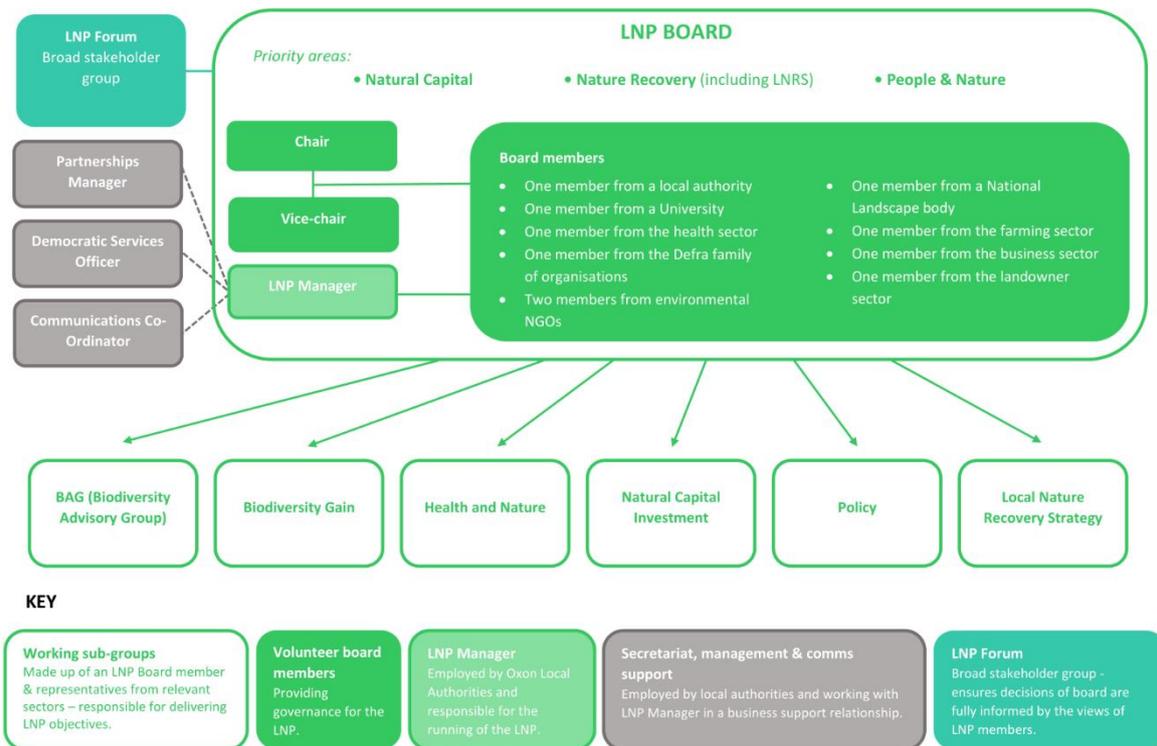


Figure 2 – Oxford Local Nature Partnership governance structure

The LNP's strategic approach is simple and clear, with three main areas of focus:

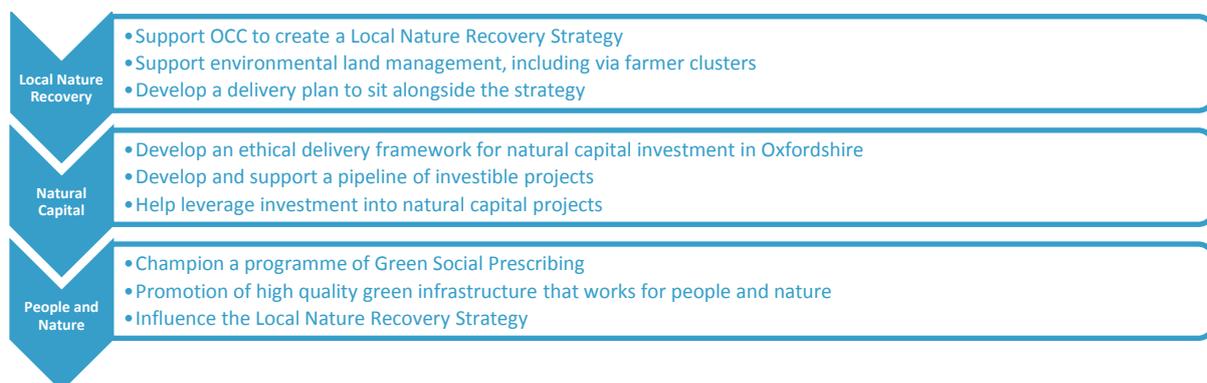


Figure 3 – Oxford Local Nature Partnership strategic approach

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Stakeholders

OLNP aims to be as inclusive as possible. The natural environment sector has previously been accused of being too inward looking and exclusive. By engaging broadly and working across society and the different sectors of the economy, we hope to

- engage more people in nature recovery
- ensure nature is considered earlier in decision-making
- ensure that it is prioritised within all work, from farming to housebuilding, from private enterprise to local communities.

The Board of OLNP is deliberately representative, to ensure those voices are heard in our decision-making, so that we can engage appropriately and design policy, strategy and advocacy in the most effective way. Board members are listed below:

Richard Benwell	Chair
Dr Prue Addison	Environmental NGO representative
Camilla Burrow	Environmental NGO representative
Michelle Leek	DEFRA family of organisations
Professor David Macdonald CBE	University representative
James Price	Farming representative
Councillor David Rouane	Local Authority representative
Ian Boll	Local Authority representative
Dr Rosie Rowe	Health representative
Simon Smith	National landscape body representative
	Business representative
	Landowner representative

Oxfordshire has a strong history of partnership working. Organisations like Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, the Earth Trust, and Wild Oxfordshire have been working closely with each other, local communities, farmers, landowners and local authorities for many years. OLNP has been mindful to complement rather than compete with existing relationships and not to duplicate effort but focus on where we can enhance existing efforts or fill any gaps.

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Figure 4 - Some of the key partners of Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership

Resources

As described above, local authority funding was provided to the Strategic Partnerships team to employ a Partnership Manager and part-cover the cost of communications and democratic services support colleagues. A total budget of £13,000 was made available to the LNP Manager to cover event costs and expenses for April 2022 – March 2024.

OLNP has hugely benefited from significant support and in-kind contributions from most of the organisations above. Meetings are chaired and attended voluntarily by wildlife NGO employees, council colleagues and statutory agency representatives. Many are committed to working in partnership and the LNP offers the ability to do so in a facilitated, strategic and proactive manner.

OLNP benefits from direct research support provided by University of Oxford. A number of researchers have been paid to compile evidence and conduct analysis that helps guide the LNP approach to issues such as nature finance and biodiversity net gain.

It is clear that financial support from the local authorities has been the key factor in the success of the LNP in 22/23, and this report shows that the same progress and impact is expected for 23/24. The report recommends that commitment is made to continuing to fund the LNP at the same level for the three following years, at least up until March 2027.

OLNP is working hard to diversify its funding. OLNP Manager is exploring a national approach to DEFRA and DHLUC to seek a level of central funding for all LNPs across

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England. The relationships developed with University of Oxford, especially following a meeting with the Vice Chancellor, is expected to continue and grow. Furthermore, it is hoped that our work on nature finance, such as with Trust for Oxfordshire’s Environment, BBOWT’s habitat banking and the North-East Cotswold’s Farmer Cluster will see increasing flows of private capital into Oxfordshire to be targeted on nature recovery and natural capital enhancement according to the priorities of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

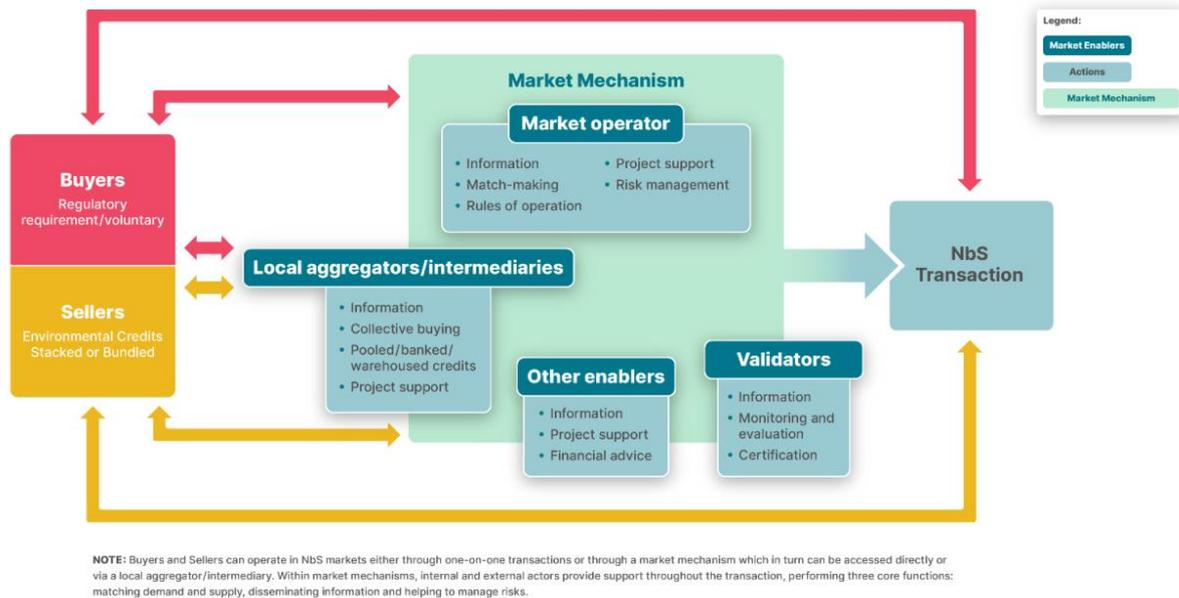


Figure 5 – diagram from the Draft Oxfordshire NCI strategy showing our proposed framework for the nature finance market

Progress to date

Much of the early part of this financial year was spent structuring the governance of the partnership and developing key relationship and programmes of work. However, OLNP has delivered a number of tangible outcomes. We have:

- convened a meeting of the key University of Oxford colleges to review strategic opportunities for delivering nature recovery via some of the biggest land-owners in the county
- supported development of the strategic county-wide approach to zero carbon and climate adaptation
- formed a policy subgroup to provide a single, positive voice in influencing strategic policy and local plans
- developed a draft Oxfordshire Natural Capital Investment Strategy
- co-led preparatory work for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- facilitated multi-county collaboration on Local Nature Recovery Strategies
- informed project criteria, project selection and governance for the landscape-scale nature recovery project Reconnecting the Bernwood, Otmoor and Ray
- supported governance of other large landscape-scale nature recovery projects (the North East Cotswolds Farmer Cluster and the Windrush Catchment Partnership)

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- created draft Natural Capital Accounts for Oxfordshire, showing in monetary terms the value of the environmental benefits society receives from nature.

Plans for 23/24

We anticipate one of the largest tasks for the coming year will be supporting OCC as the responsible authority to work with partners and stakeholders to create the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This key environmental strategy will hopefully be incorporated into the planning system to guide decisions on spatial prioritisation. OLNP will continue to host the steering group for this project. We will also lead on ensuring cross border alignment (ie with neighbouring counties), and enable engagement with key sectors like business and farming.

The Biodiversity Advisory Group anticipates changes to the draft nature recovery network map to make it more fit for the planning system and more representative of the areas of land which are nature rich, currently known as Conservation Target Areas.

The people and nature group hopes to expand its resource to include a part-time project officer. Outputs are expected to include a county-wide map of accessible greenspace, highlighting areas to target investment and action.

The Biodiversity Gain group expects to continue its work in supporting the LPAs in readiness for mandatory biodiversity net gain. We will support LPAs to require more than the mandatory 10% gain and establish a mechanism for aligning offsite delivery with the emergency Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The Natural Capital Investment group will create a natural capital investment strategy for Oxfordshire. We will develop a framework for biodiversity and carbon offsetting that supports a mix of habitats and land management practices, in alignment with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. We will support delivery of at least one demonstrator project, with an ambition to raise £500,000 to support development of a project pipeline.

Risk Register

Top three risks associated with continuing the fund the LNP

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Severity	Mitigation
LNPs are overtaken by another form of strategic nature partnership	Low	Medium	Low	None required
LNP loses goodwill of key partners	Low	High	Medium	Continued strong stakeholder engagement

Top three risks associated with NOT continuing to fund the LNP

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Severity
Central resource no longer employed leads to delayed progress of nature recovery	High	High	High

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Unsupported planning system struggles to implement environmental legislation	Low	High	Medium
Lack of coordinating resource for nature finance leads to reduced ability to leverage funds	Medium	High	Medium

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

Title:	Towards a Land Use Framework for Oxfordshire
Author:	Matt Whitney
Date:	08/03/2023

Summary:

Used well, land can provide multifunctional environmental, economic and social benefits, but it is finite, and has increasing demands placed upon it. This paper presents some information to guide Board members' consideration of the importance of a land use framework for Oxfordshire.

The Board is asked to:

Consider how a land use framework could benefit Oxfordshire
Suggest how it might best be taken forward.

Introduction

We all rely on land for energy, transport, food, recreation, housing and business. Land also has a crucial role to play in helping us to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Resilient connected ecosystems are vital for all human activity. Used well, land can provide multifunctional environmental, economic and social benefits, but it is finite, and has increasing demands placed upon it. Recent government targets include:

- Maintaining our food self-sufficiency at 60%
- Increasing woodland by 1million acres
- Increasing new habitats for nature by 1 million acres
- Enlarging the area of protected landscapes by around 1.8 million acres
- Building 300,000 new homes every year

Clearly, the achievement of all these requires us to make land 'work harder' to deliver multiple benefits, outcomes and objectives from each piece of land. This is sometimes known as land sharing (as opposed to land sparing, for which there is also an important role) and should be a key consideration for land use decision making in the 21st century.

What is a land use framework?

The Royal Society summed up the case for land use framework as follows:

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"A national land use framework would allow for decisions concerning land use to be made in a coherent and consistent manner that recognises the finiteness of land. [A land use framework is] particularly important in operationalising the concept of multifunctionality since different incentives are needed in different places to reflect the varying suitability of landscapes for specific policy outcomes"

The Food Farming and Countryside Commission states:

"A land use framework is a new approach for better decisions about land. It guides local and national decision makers with a clear set of principles and practices. These processes are supported by tools (including existing maps and information) designed to help reconcile conflicting demands and balance different needs."

It's not a prescriptive strategy, nor will it mandate actions or curtail sovereignty of District and City Councils' Local Plans. It is more appropriately considered a process creating and collating a co-designed framework of evidence and principles that can support strategic land-use decisions.

National position

In its food strategy, government committed to publishing a land use framework in 2023, reflecting its objectives for English agriculture, net zero and the environment. Scotland and Wales have both already developed one. On 13th December 2022, the House of Lords select committee published its white paper – *Making the most out of England's land*. This paper urged the government to ensure that the national land use framework covered all areas of land use, not just those under DEFRA's control.

Any approach to framing decisions around land use and land use change needs to consider and align with existing and forthcoming policy and legislation. A significant challenge is the level of uncertainty around key issues like Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Biodiversity Net Gain, Environmental Land Management scheme, planning reform and energy policy. This can also be seen as an opportunity – now is the time to shape a local, joined-up, co-designed and shared approach that can guide priorities in all these areas through a non-siloed framework.

How could it work in Oxfordshire

Any national land use framework will have to be delivered and administered locally, noting this government's support for the devolution agenda. The Food Farming and Countryside Commission are currently supporting creation of LUFs in two pilot areas – Devon and Cambridgeshire.

Early feedback from these approaches shows that wide engagement and co-design with a broad cross section of stakeholders is key, as is the prioritisation of the multifunctionality of land. Data is also central to successful decision making – the graph below shows current land use in Oxfordshire

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

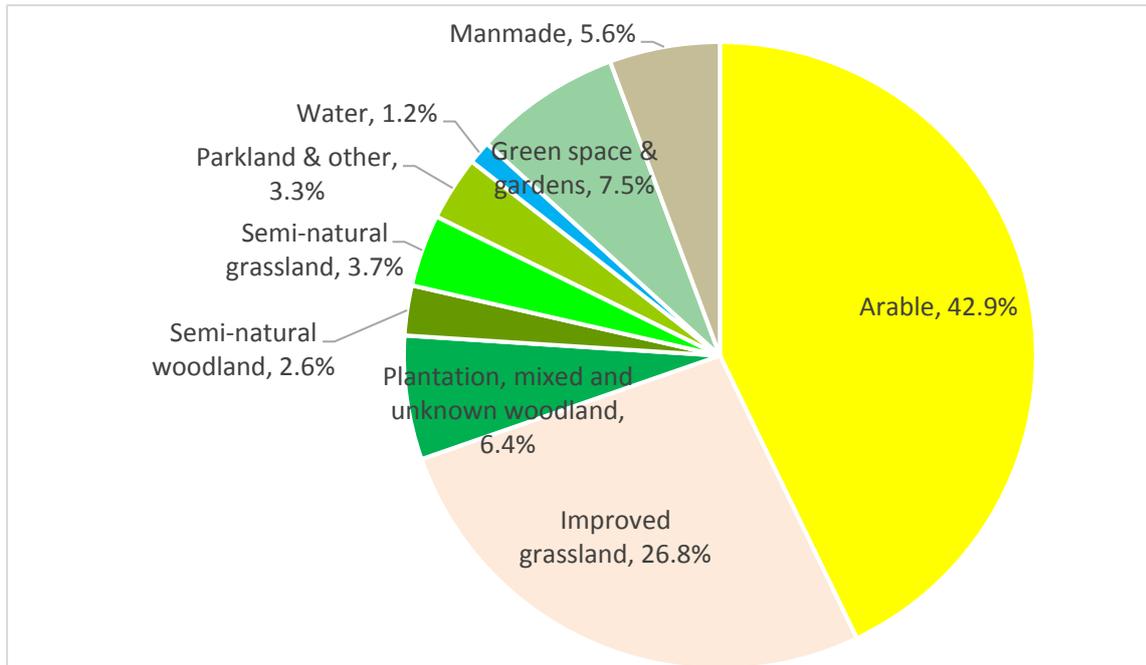


Figure 1 – Current Land Use in Oxfordshire by habitat type (courtesy of Environmental Change Institute)

Oxfordshire is well supplied with local data, with a Natural Capital baseline and Draft Nature Recovery Network already developed. Four key actions relating to data are seen as key:

- enhancing the Nature Recovery Network mapping;
- updating the State of Nature report to provide a more current baseline;
- developing ecosystem service opportunity mapping – showing where demand for environmental benefits (such as flood risk reduction) can be met by changes to land use, or improvements to habitat quality.
- Making the above freely accessible online (perhaps via the Local Nature Partnership website).

This paper recognises there are areas where partners will disagree, including on some elements of spatial distribution of assets and development. However, far from prohibiting the proactive development of a joined-up set of principles to guide land use decision making, rather it exemplifies its importance.

Much work has been undertaken locally to bring Local Authority decision making closer together. For instance, all Local Authority partners have signed up to deliver the Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire. The development of a LUF can be seen as a logical next step, providing a principles and data that can guide all partners in their considerations about future land use decisions.

Optimisation for Nature Recovery

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

The Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership is working to understand how Oxfordshire can play its part in halting (and reversing) the decline of species & protecting 30% of England for nature by 2030. This paper proposes this work needs to evaluate how land use can be optimised to contribute as much as possible to this aim, while still delivering homes, energy and healthy food.

Nature's recovery and net zero are likely to require extensive and substantial land use change (e.g. woodland creation & less intensive farming). Green Alliance conducted research¹ which showed using the most productive land for high yield food production, the least productive for seminatural habitat and mixed wildlife friendly farming on the rest (a 'three compartment' model of land use) would result in a doubling of wildlife by 2050. This approach could be accompanied by reducing livestock farming in the UK, achieved by changing people's diets.

¹ <https://green-alliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Shaping-UK-land-use.pdf>

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

Title:	OLNP Board ToR and membership
Author:	Matt Whitney
Date:	08/03/2023

Summary:

This paper presents an update version of the OLNP Board Terms of Reference.

It also proposes two new Board members to replace the outgoing landowner representative and business representative.

Further, an additional Board member is proposed, with rationale provided for their membership.

The Board is asked to:

Approve the revised Terms of Reference.

Approve the inclusion of a representative of Oxfordshire’s main landscape-scale nature recovery project on the Board.

Strong and appropriate governance is vital for the effective functioning of the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership. One element of this is ensuring that our Terms of Reference are appropriate. At the last meeting Board members agreed to review the Terms of Reference. This has been done, with strong support from Democratic Services Manager of the Strategic Partnerships team of South and Vale District Council. These Terms of Reference are appended to this paper, and the **Board is asked to approve their adoption.**

Key to the success of the Local Nature Partnership is that its Board and wider membership is cross-sectoral, involving individuals and organisations from across the societal and economic spectrum. Specifically, having representation from the business and landowning sectors is key.

The previous business representative, Giles Brockbank, was appointed following recommendation by OxLEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) but has never attended an LNP meeting. Therefore, the LNP Manager has been recruiting a replacement, which is still ongoing.

The previous landowner representative, Lady Jennifer Stringer, was an engaged Board member, but unfortunately had to stand back for personal reasons. Lady Stringer suggested a possible replacement and a conversation regarding this is ongoing.

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

As Board members will know, the natural environment sector has in the last decade moved from a position of conservation of nature-rich sites to one of wider nature recovery at the landscape scale. This approach achieves maximum increases to biodiversity and enhancement of environmental benefits. Landscape-scale projects are hard to design and deliver, requiring strong collective action from a large number of landowners and partners. It is considered useful for the LNP Board to better understand this process.

This paper proposes a further addition to the Board - one of the lead representatives from the major Landscape Recovery project in the county, the North East Cotswolds Farmer Cluster. Tim Coates's experience combines financial and agricultural knowledge and expertise derived from being a 4th generation family farmer now managing over 2,500 acres of farming enterprises specialising in regenerative and nature-positive farming and participates in a number of natural capital markets.

Before co-founding Oxbury Bank, where he leads on strategic and product development and holds the prescribed responsibility for managing Climate-related Financial Risks, Tim was Subject Matter Expert on the Authorisation of New Banks at the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), where he also worked as part of the Executive Office on strategic issues for conduct regulation and was in the team that operationalised the Payment Systems Regulator. Previously, Tim worked in consultancy, advising clients in the Financial Services, Energy and Healthcare sectors. **The Board is asked to approve the appointment of Tim Coates to the Board.**



Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership Board Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

This document provides the terms of reference for the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership, (LNP) Board.

1.1 Purpose of the LNP

The purpose of the LNP is to radically enhance nature, its positive impact on our climate, health and wellbeing, and the priority it is given in decision making, ensuring Oxfordshire is a county where people and nature thrive.

2. Purpose of LNP Board

The purpose of the Board is to govern the LNP, including to:

- Provide strategic leadership for the LNP and to champion nature
- Be responsible for delivery of the LNP purpose
- Oversee management of LNP finances and report to the body accountable for finances
- Evaluate success of the LNP and delivery of the work programme
- Support cross sectoral collaboration, including informing and consulting with the Forum
- Establish strong relationships with key stakeholders, in particular the Future Oxfordshire Partnership

2.1 Membership of the Board

The Board will consist of members representing the following sectors:

- Local authority, (Councillor: Leader or Cabinet Member Level)
- Local authority, (Officer: Chief Executive/Director level)
- University/Academic institution
- Health sector
- Defra family of organisations
- Environmental non-governmental organisations, (two members)
- National Landscape body
- Farming sector

- Business sector
- Landowner sector
- An independent Chair

2.2 Essential criteria for Board members:

- Experience of operating in a senior position relevant to Oxfordshire's natural environment and/or relevant social/economic sectors.
- A track record of operating at the strategic level with relevant significant national, regional and local players.
- Ability to both act as a good team player and to lead initiatives on behalf of the LNP Board.
- Strong and effective communication skills.
- Having sufficient time, enthusiasm and energy to help enable the Oxfordshire LNP achieve its aims and objectives.
- High standards of personal conduct consistent with the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#)

2.3 Role of Board Members

LNP Board members will assist in the delivery of the LNP's aims and objectives by:

- Fulfilling the responsibilities of a member of the LNP governing body.
- Engaging with the LNP Forum.
- Advocating the aims and objectives of the LNP within their sector, reporting back to their sector on LNP activities, and identifying opportunities within that sector for furthering LNP aims and objectives.
- Contributing to the development and implementation of the LNP's strategic approach using the knowledge, skills, contacts and influence available within their sector.
- Influencing relevant strategies, plans and funding mechanisms to further the LNP's aims.
- Where appropriate, supporting the Chair and Board to champion the LNP and nature through engaging with key local, regional and national partners.
- At meetings disclose any matters of interest or conflict on issues that may directly affect the decision-making process.

2.4 Appointment and removal of Board Members

- Board members will be appointed for a three-year term, and a maximum of one additional consecutive term.
- The Board acting with a 75% majority of all members (not just those in attendance) may decide to invite additional members as required to meet the strategic aims of the partnership
- Should a member of the Board leave their position within their sector they will resign from the Board and a new member be appointed.

- The Board acting with a 75% majority of all members (not just those in attendance) may remove a Board member and begin the process to appoint a replacement from the relevant sector, if in the view of the Board the member has: (a) failed to attend 3 consecutive meetings, (b) failed to act in the interests of the LNP, (c) acted in a way which could bring the LNP into disrepute, or (d) failed to resolve a conflict of interest.

2.5 Appointment of the Chair

The Chair will be appointed by the Board after consultation with the Forum.

2.6 Role of the Chair

The Chair will:

- Be a champion for Oxfordshire's LNP at all times and pro-actively build support for the aims and priorities of the LNP.
- Represent the LNP at appropriate events, meetings or functions. If not able to attend the Vice-Chair or other appropriate Board member will attend in his/her place.
- Act as spokesperson for the LNP where appropriate.
- Seek to fulfil his/her duties in a manner that is free from bias and influence
- Act as Chair at LNP Board meetings

2.7 Role of the Vice-Chair

- Substitute for the Chair
- Support planning of Board meetings, especially regarding the strategic agenda.

3. Other operational arrangements:

3.1 Meeting frequency

The Board will meet a minimum of quarterly.

3.2 Quorum

The quorum for LNP Board meetings will be 50% of the Board membership present in person or virtually.

3.3 Voting

As a voluntary partnership most decisions will be by consensus. When voting is required, the following process applies:

- Only Board members present either in person or virtually at a meeting may vote.

- Voting is by show of hands in open forum.
- The Chair has a second casting vote if voting is tied.
- In between meetings, if a vote is required, the Chair may seek votes via email.

3.4 Meeting agendas and papers

- Board meetings will be facilitated and organised by the LNP Secretariat.
- The LNP's agendas and associated written reports will be circulated to the members of the LNP at least three clear working days before the meeting. Nonadherence to this principal however will not invalidate a meeting.
- Agendas, reports will be published online unless an item involves the discussion of a confidential items.
- Minutes of Board meetings will be published online once approved by the Board.

3.5 Attendance of Officers and Observers at Board meetings

- The LNP Manager and LNP Secretariat will attend Board meetings.
- Observers and guests may be invited to attend and comment, in a non-voting capacity at the invitation of the Board or Board members via the Chair

4. Review of the Board Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Board on an annual basis, normally in January.

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

Title:	OLNP Sub groups update paper
Author:	Matt Whitney
Date:	08/03/2023

Summary:

The Local Nature Partnership currently has six active sub-groups. This paper gives an update on activity from each group, provides Board members with insight into key decisions taken by each group, and poses some questions to the Board.

The Board is asked to:

Biodiversity Gain group

UPDATE:

The group has an awareness that the policy of BNG is trying to achieve two outcomes simultaneously that have some tensions between them:

- To create greener spaces near where people live and work, providing health and wellbeing and place-making benefits
- To support nature recovery.

The primary aim of the group is still the collation of evidence to support Local Authorities to require a level of biodiversity net gain (BNG) greater than 10%.

The group notes that government have announced provision of additional funding to Local Authorities to help them prepare for the introduction of mandatory BNG (which is expected to be November 2023). The level and date of this funding is not known currently. A best estimate is £35,000 per authority. Once more detail is available on this, it is considered interesting to explore a potential pooling of resources, but this of course would be up to the sovereign councils to decide upon and agree.

There is disappointment that the government’s delayed response to the BNG consultation (published Weds 22nd Feb, following a consultation held twelve months previously) does not address some key concerns, chiefly around

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

KEY DECISIONS:

- To support a University of Oxfordshire research project exploring historic losses of biodiversity resulting from previous development.
- To collate data supporting the hypothesis that Oxfordshire’s nature is in a worse state than nationally.

QUESTIONS for the Board:

Nature and Health group

UPDATE:

The LNP Health and Nature subgroup met most recently on 9th February 2023. It was another lively, engaging and well attended (32 individuals/organisations were represented) meeting with some really useful discussion generated. There was a substantive item on the new Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework which had been launched on 31st January, presented by Christine Howard of NE (link to the Framework include here for info)

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>.

This meeting also took an update on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy from Matt Whitney (expected from April 2023). It was noted that Camilla Burrow will act as the key link between this sub-group and development of the LNRS and regular updates will be required at future meetings of this sub-group.

The meeting also took an update on the Mapping of Need and Provision of Nature Based Activities from Rhiannon Evetts of Wild Oxfordshire. This invaluable mapping continues to be enhanced & Rhiannon noted that it will soon be searchable by postcode which will be key for social prescribers.

The meeting then heard from two group members who provided an outline of the projects they are involved in – thanks to Alex Williams of Muddy Feet and Catriona Bass of the Thames Valley Wildflower Meadow Restoration Project for their fascinating & inspiring talks.

The next meeting will be on 18th May 2023.

A reminder of the objectives and proposed outputs of the group:

Priority No	Sub-Group Proposed Objectives	Alignment with Forum Proposals	Specific Forum ideas	Deliverable outputs	Timescale
1	Input into the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to ensure that it is a key thread throughout the strategy	X	People and nature needs to be a thread running through the LNRS not just a chapter	An LNRS which fully considers the needs of people and the importance of human connectivity with nature	Linked to LNRS delivery timetable -

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2	Promote Green Social Prescribing	X	Link eNGOs with health Increase skills in engaging with seldom heard	A social prescribing strategy for Oxfordshire which recognises the role of 'green prescribing' Training to share best practice in reaching groups who do not usually access nature Inclusion of nature activities on the Livewell website – social prescribers' directory Engagement with the NHS – to maximise uptake of nature based activities and to influence 'greening' of the NHS estate	2023 – linked to Oxfordshire social prescribing strategy timetable
3	Promotion of high quality green infrastructure that works for people and nature that works for people and nature, maximising the quality and use of existing green spaces	X Make access to nature easy	Focus on active travel, influencing planning policy, design guides, improving the quality of our existing green spaces so that they are multifunctional and enable access for all	Develop definitions of what we mean by high quality, accessible green spaces Identify opportunities for increasing biodiversity – check use of One Public Estate and engage with the Universities to influence their land management activities Review and provide feedback on existing Local Authority Design Guides	2023
Enablers					
1	Networking and collaboration	X	Understand what is happening and where so we can identify the gaps	Share case studies of good practice and promote them on the LNP web site Share good practice re: sustainability of projects	
2	Mapping of need and service provision	X Focus on equality, diversity and inclusion.	Development of case studies.	Detailed, accessible map of nature activities which also shows the gaps and under-utilised green spaces. (Link with existing work including HERO, sustainable healthcare, Wild Oxfordshire and District maps)	By May 2023
3	Mapping funding and free training opportunities	X Bring together research, evidence and local data	Layer priority areas of need with funding opportunities	Create a directory of funding and training opportunities	By March 2023

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

KEY DECISIONS:

- To support the submission of a funding application within the Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery, for a project on updating our understanding of the inequitable distribution of accessible greenspace across the county.
- To seek additional funding for a project manager for this workstream

QUESTIONS for the Board: None

Biodiversity Advisory Group

UPDATE: At its last meeting, the group agreed in principle to include parts of River Thames catchment as a new Conservation Target Area (CTA) but needed more time to assess whether there is sufficient data available to support its inclusion. This is a key consideration, as CTAs currently have some impact on informing planning decisions, so the relevant local planning authority (South and Vale District Council) needs to be confident that there is data to support this should the issue ever be disputed eg by a developer. Currently CTAs form the basis of the draft nature recovery network map.

KEY DECISIONS: To assess whether sufficient data is available to support the inclusion of River Thames catchment as a Conservation Target Area.

QUESTIONS for Board:

Natural Capital Investment group

UPDATE:

The group has met once since the last LNP Board meeting and is focussed around five key areas:

- Evidence
- Project pipeline
- Investment
- Framework
- Natural Capital Investment Plan

Evidence

Research, supported by University of Oxford's Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery, is ongoing to establish 1) the cost of delivering our nature recovery ambitions in Oxfordshire and 2) the likely size of the offsite BNG market in Oxfordshire. This work is making good progress and should be in a position to share some initial findings in the coming weeks.

Project Pipeline

Having projects ready for investment and delivery has always been an issue for the natural environment sector. In order for this work to be taken forward effectively additional resource is required and is being sought, including via exploration of an ELM Test and Trial funding opportunity. We are also working with the University Colleges to assess potential of their landholding.

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Investment

We met with Ben Caldecott, a senior figure at the Leverhulme centre with a background and strong professional network in the investment world, especially around green finance. We also met with Triodos Bank to understand their position on nature finance. These meeting confirmed what we already know – there is much work to be done before we are ready to receive repayable finance. Funding can be sought now, but we are not ready to recruit repayable finance, nor should we overstate its importance.

Framework

While natural capital investment in Oxfordshire will include a variety of actors, it is considered vital that a strong, independent funder exists to help aggregate projects, attract investment, and provide administrative services to other more autonomous projects. Thus, we are supporting Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment to engage with Local Authority partners to explore how they might best constitute themselves so as to support roll out of the offsite elements of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

LNP is the named lead for land-based carbon sequestration element of the Pathways to Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (PAZCO) work, led by Oxfordshire County Council in partnership with the other Local Authorities.

Natural Capital Investment Strategy/Plan

Work has begun on a natural capital investment plan. This will be shared with the Board once a working draft has been agreed and commented on by the group, prior to wider consultation and socialisation. It has become clear that additional resource is required in order to finalise the strategy and gain senior level support for delivery from within the Local Authorities.

KEY DECISIONS:

- 1) To support South and Vale District Council in submission of a funding bid for a Natural Capital Investment project manager, and additional financial resource, to focus on developing a
- 2) To agree to act as the named lead for the nature finance and land-based carbon offsetting elements of PAZCO

QUESTIONS for the Board:

LNRS steering group

UPDATE:

- DEFRA have confirmed rollout will be from April 2023
- We still await the secondary regulations and guidance
- LNP Manager has attended a webinar hosted by DEFRA aimed at preparing LNPs for LNRS.
- Oxfordshire County Council, as provisional responsible authority, have confirmation of additional funding from DEFRA
- LNP Manager convening cross-border meetings with neighbouring counties

KEY DECISIONS: OCC are recruiting for a LNRS project manager

QUESTIONS for the Board:

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Nature Policy group

UPDATE: Following submission of responses to both the Oxford City Plan consultation and the Botley West Solar Farm consultation, this group has now found an appropriate chair. Andy Egan has experience of working within an LPA, and now holds a role leading the Woodland Trust's national policy team.

A Draft Terms of Reference has been created, which is shared with the Board for comment.

KEY DECISIONS: to hold the first meeting of this group on March 21st.

QUESTIONS for the Board: Comment on the Terms of Reference for the group.

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

Appendix 1

Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership

Nature Policy working group

Terms of Reference

1. Description

The Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership (OLNP) exists to radically enhance nature, its positive impact on our climate and the priority it's given, helping to make Oxfordshire a county where people and nature thrive.

The Nature Policy working group has been set up to work under the OLNP. The group comprises representatives from organisations with experience of, and expertise in, developing and implementing nature-positive policy locally.

The OLNP is not a campaigning organisation. The Policy group seeks positively to influence policy in a supportive, diplomatic and proactive way to ensure that it does the best it can to enhance nature for the benefit of wildlife, climate, and people.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the LNP Nature Policy working group is to influence strategic and local plans to ensure the best outcomes for nature. It will do this by:

- Understanding the timelines for the various plans and strategies
- Working collaboratively and in a positive way to design and support the design of policies which ensure the best outcomes for nature
- Coordinate work between Local Authorities to ensure cross-county alignment where possible.

The group will restrict its input to aspects of plans and strategies that relate to its core purpose. It will not comment on issues such as landscape character. It will work at a strategic scale. The group will seek to develop OLNP position statements that can be shared via the OLNP website, and that can form the basis of any consultation responses.

3. Membership

Membership of Nature Policy working group is by invitation only and is reviewed annually at the first meeting in each financial year (i.e. the first meeting after 1st April).

Janice Bamsey (West Oxfordshire District Council)

Camilla Burrow (Wild Oxfordshire)

Susan Harbour (South and Vale District Council)

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Mai Jarvis (Oxford City Council)

Christine Cherry (Cherwell District Council)

Helen Marshall (CPRE)

Becky Micklem (Oxfordshire County Council)

Sue Roberts (BioAdundance)

Neil Rowntree (BBOWT)

Matthew Stanton (BBOWT)

Andrew Thompson (West Oxfordshire District Council)

(all unconfirmed but included as all have expressed at least tentative interest)

Members are expected to abide by the Nolan Principles for behaviour in public life. Members are also expected to be able to contribute to the work of the group which is largely expected to consist of formulation of policy positions and responses to consultations.

4. Chair

The Nature Policy Working Group will be chaired by Andy Egan. The Chair will be annually elected at the first meeting in each financial year. The Chair should not be an elected member of a Council but should have a good grasp of the national nature policy landscape and a firm understanding of how to formulate policy positions for local authorities. The Chair can complete a maximum of two successive terms.

5. Meetings and duration

The Nature Policy working group will meet on an ad hoc basis which is expected to be no more than 6 times a year. Meetings will be dial-in wherever possible. The continuation of the group will be reviewed annually at the first meeting in each financial year.

6. Secretariat

The LNP Manager will provide the Secretariat role. This will be reviewed annually at the first meeting in each financial year. Minutes of each meeting will be circulated to all members and can be shared with colleagues as relevant. Any discussion of a confidential nature will be highlighted as such and recorded separately in a confidential meeting note.

7. Reporting

Camilla Burrow will represent the working group at the LNP Board, and the LNP Manager will act as conduit between this and other subgroups as appropriate. The group has delegated responsibility to speak on behalf of OLNP. Board members will be included within conversations about the appropriate stance to take. Other OLNP groups may be consulted to inform positions on certain topics.

Oxon LNP Board Paper for Approval

Title:	OLNP Finance Report
Author:	Matt Whitney
Date:	08/03/2023

Summary:

This paper presents an update on the financial position of the LNP.

The Board is asked to:

Acknowledge the financial position of the Local Nature Partnership

The table below illustrates the financial position of the Local Nature Partnership. It shows that we started with £13,000 budget for the two financial years 22/23 and 23/24, of which £10,402 remains. Due to an accounting error, the £2,500 payment to Wild Oxfordshire agreed at our September meeting has not yet been transacted. Once this is accounted for, the partnership will have £7,902 to spend until March 31st 2024.

Costc	Costc (T)	Account	Account (T)	Working Budget	Amount	Variance £
LN20	Local Nature Partnership	2201	Room & office Rents	0.00	722.25	722.25
LN20	Local Nature Partnership	4002	Hire of equipment	0.00	328.00	328.00
LN20	Local Nature Partnership	4053	Publicity and promotion costs	7,000.00	0.00	-7,000.00
LN20	Local Nature Partnership	4066	Other expenses	6,000.00	0.00	-6,000.00
LN20	Local Nature Partnership	4102	Food and catering	0.00	1,417.25	1,417.25
LN20	Local Nature Partnership	4307	Stationery	0.00	130.32	130.32
LN20	Local Nature Partnership			13,000.00	2,597.82	-10,402.18