



Association of Directors of  
Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport

## Environment Board

24<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 11:00-12:00

*MS Teams videoconference call – join via link in calendar invitation*

### Notes

1.	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b></p> <p>SR welcomed everyone to today's monthly catch up. The monthly meetings which were instigated in the light of Covid.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Board consider value of monthly catch-ups, and whether to continue in May, prior to discussion at the April meeting.</p> <p>Notes of the previous meeting were acknowledged and the fact that most actions are in hand. DD/SR are working on the agenda for the April meeting.</p>	Steve Read  ALL
2.	<p><b>Covid-19 and general service resilience / recovery</b></p> <p>SR reported that WSCC feel like they are now on a plateau having been through 3 cycles of increased work coming through due to Covid-19. Most issues are to support colleagues with setting up facilities for community testing and providing support to other agencies.</p> <p>DH reported similar. Main work for Lincolnshire at the moment is to embed sustainability across services which has increased in the lead up to the election; Environment (Carbon management plan is the primary driver of political interest as the broader green agenda has become overtly on the political agenda); Transformation Programme for smarter ways of working.</p>	All

HWRs booking system will be live from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March. Will need to deal with the fall out of the restriction of one visit per week. Other issues to deal with are traffic, local beauty spots, public rights of way and the impact on the countryside.

SK commented that the number of visitors to country parks have more than doubled. There are ongoing complaints of illegal parking, noise, litter.

Tim de-Keyzer (Suffolk) reported similar experiences in Suffolk. Usage of public rights of way have more than doubled as well as an increase in visitors which will increase further this season. Significant work is required on rights of way infrastructure and programming it so as not to impact local economy and visitors.

**ACTION:** Board to get in touch with SK if you are doing anything around restoration in terms of environment damage to flora/fauna etc or have any thoughts. Also, relating to recovery work funding aimed at environmental charities.

DD reminded the Board that 2 Rights of Way surveys were run last April/May to get a handle of increased use of public rights of way network across the country. There was a further survey this February which was a broader survey re. PROW local service schemes. About 80/90% of LAs are reporting a significant increase of up to 3 or 4 times normal usage but not as high as last April/May. Results of this survey are being reviewed tomorrow (25<sup>th</sup> March) and results will be put on the website.

HB to take away RoW comments from meeting chat to tomorrow's national RoW meeting. CM is suggesting that the deadline be extended.

SP reported feedback from the fortnightly waste impact survey that shows the Covid-19 impact on collection services have reduced with 20% of responding councils reporting minor impact due to sickness/self-isolation. HWRs are reporting significant impact as a result of social distancing requirements impacting sites' capacity and the time of year meaning sites are getting busier. The survey will be paused from end of March.

**Working Groups**

ALL

Steve Palfrey

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p>Waste</p> <p>DRS and EPR consultations to be published today.</p> <p>RAWS (Resources and Waste Strategy) - Consultations delayed and eagerly awaited. Likely to still come out before pre-election period.</p> <p>ADEPT Waste Group have identified volunteer T&amp;F groups to coordinate responses to the 3 consultations, and a weekly catch up meeting for interested members. Info to be circulated across ADEPT Board Members.</p> </li> <li> <p>Energy &amp; Clean Growth</p> <p>Had a good meeting around integrating climate change low carbon net zero into decision making which is really productive.</p> <p>There are 3 strands – 1) decision making 2) green procurement and 3) spatial planning. Green procurement is covering what to spend where and how to look at new products/services, doing this more efficiently and also bringing closer to home in terms of emissions. Presenting to CIPFA next week.</p> <p><a href="#">ADEPT/CIPFA webinar: Sustainable procurement for places 31 March   ADEPT (adeptnet.org.uk)</a></p> <p><b>ACTION: If anyone knows any more around review of Green Book please inform CM.</b></p> </li> <li> <p>Flood and Water Management</p> <p>JB's last meeting is 21<sup>st</sup> April and 28<sup>th</sup> April Environment Board.</p> <p><b>ACTION: JB to e-mail Board for interest in the Chair role for JB to discuss with SR.</b></p> <p>Action Plan with EA is due to be published in April but might be delayed to after the election. Action plan is short thinking only planning for this coming year.</p> <p>At the next meeting there will be discussion around finance and funding. LFAs funding line is no longer a visible line which makes fighting for funding harder. Possibility of inviting Somerset how to the next meeting to discuss how they are getting on with rivers etc.</p> </li> </ul>	<p>Carolyn McKenzie</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>Julie Beeden</p> <p>JB</p>
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	<p>Waiting to hear re. flood resilience and innovation bid. HB confirmed that the list is currently with Ministers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural Capital &amp; Heritage Environmental gain and what more can be done was discussed at Monday's working group meeting. New tools, guidance and approaches coming out for Natural Capital.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> TDK to feedback on a new signposting tool that EA are helping to develop.</p> <p>An online audit toolkit has been developed called register and account tool.</p> <p>Government are using EA as conduit on Natural Capital. EA are keen to make connections into Dasgupta Review and also the Green Book review. Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilots have been extended to May.</p> <p>Need to keep convo going with Defra.</p> <p>ADEPT Environment Board will probably want to engage in the Environmental Principles Consultation.</p> <p>Forestry Commission have announced tree planting (local treescapes fund), which is a one year fund. They are looking for top tier authorities to coordinate but EA are writing with their concerns.</p> <p>Ministers are interested in making announcements soon on the Glover review of protected landscapes and the suggested National Landscape Service.</p> <p><b>Defra</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environment Bill – Consultation launched on environmental principles on the 10th of March. The Government is consulting on the draft policy statement on the five environmental principles which sets out how they should be interpreted and proportionately applied. The Consultation is expected to last twelve weeks. Full details on how to respond at GOV.UK.</li> </ul>	<p>Tim De Keyzer</p> <p>TDK</p> <p>Joe</p>
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Defra remain committed to delivering their three key waste reforms on a Deposit Return Scheme, Extended Producer Responsibility and consistent recycling collections. The timeline for introduction will be set out in forthcoming consultations which will be published shortly.

The five Local Nature Recovery Strategies pilots are progressing well, and Defra are learning valuable lessons for how to roll them out across the country following Royal Assent. They will continue to prepare as much as possible for roll out prior to the return of the Bill.

- New tree fund for local communities announced £2.7 million available announced on the 12<sup>th</sup> March for local authorities to increase tree planting and natural regeneration in locations outside woodlands. The Local Authority Treescapes fund is aimed at establishing more trees in riverbanks, hedgerows, parklands, urban areas, beside roads and footpaths, in copses and shelterbelts, including neglected, disused and vacant community spaces.

The fund will help the nation build back greener from the pandemic and will target landscapes that have been neglected in the past, ecologically damaged or affected by tree diseases like ash dieback - with ash being the most common species of tree found in non-woodland locations.

Grants are available for local authorities, working together with community groups, volunteers, NGOs. Full details and how to apply [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk). Successful applicants will be informed by the end of July.

- Green Recovery Challenge Fund 2  
£40m second round of the Green Recovery Challenge Fund opened on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March for applications for grants of up to £2m each. All projects must contribute to at least one of the following themes:
  - nature conservation and restoration;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nature-based solutions, particularly focused on climate change mitigation and adaptation; and,</li> <li>• connecting people with nature.</li> </ul> <p>For grants of over £250,000, applicants must submit an expression of interest by 22<sup>nd</sup> March and if successful will be invited to submit a full application. The deadline for applications under £250,000 is 14<sup>th</sup> April. Full details at <a href="https://www.gov.uk">GOV.UK</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills Survey Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Biodiversity Net Gain survey which has now closed with over 300 contributions. Responses now being analysed.</li> <li>• Local Authority Engagement Planning engagement and local authorities on understanding preparedness for implementing the policies, strategies and targets in the Environment Bill. Had a good initial meeting with ADEPT and the LGA on 5<sup>th</sup> March. Have a host of bilateral meetings with LAs over next 2 weeks. Outcome of meetings will feed into thinking on support LAs may require and key learnings that can be shared across all LAs.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Joe to find out how far Defra were engaged with the Community Growth fund and Levelling Up fund. HB advised it would be good to talk to Highways colleagues if Tier 2 authorities.</p> <p>SK welcomed rollout of the Fuel Poverty funding but explained that Essex were not able to take delivery of it and so is asking the local energy hub to manage it.</p> <p><b>ADEPT</b> Message already given that DRS and EPR consultations to be published today. Spring Seminar and President Awards on 27<sup>th</sup> May. Theme is “reimagining place: a focus on town centres and highstreets”. <b>ACTION:</b> Board to consider entering awards. There are 3 categories. Details here: <a href="https://www.adeptnet.org.uk/invite">https://www.adeptnet.org.uk/invite</a></p>	<p>JW</p> <p>Hannah/David</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
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	<p><b>ACTION:</b> Register for CIPFA webinar on 31<sup>st</sup> March.</p> <p>See <a href="https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-principles/draft-policy-statement/">https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-principles/draft-policy-statement/</a> for the consultation launched by Defra.</p> <p>LNRS – Andy Holden gave a presentation to us in January and answers to our questions were circulated on 15<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>Agenda for the next main meeting in April is looking good:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dasgupta review</li> <li>• Interim and forthcoming Office for Environmental Protection</li> <li>• COP26</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Dates of future meetings/calls</b></p> <p>28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 – 10:00-12:30</p> <p>No further monthly catch-ups booked. To be discussed during April meeting.</p>	