



One City Environment Board

DRAFT Notes and Actions 22 February 2024

meeting

Allford Hall Monaghan Morris Architects, meeting in public session

- Attendees** **Co-chairs:** Cllr Marley Bennett (BCC), Ann Cousins (Arup)
Members: Lucy Edgar, Roger Hoare, Alex Minshull, Katherine Piper, Olivia Sweeney, Sam Willitts, Savita Willmott
Invitees: Francesca Barclay (City Office), Cara Clitheroe (North Somerset Council), Dan Green (Wessex Water), Enda Hayes (BACCC), Jo House (BACCC), Iain McGuffog (Bristol Water)
Public Observers: Chloe Briggs, Vic Wakefield-Jarrett
- Apologies** Ian Barrett (Avon Wildlife Trust), Ben Shayler (Environment Agency), Chris Priest (University of Bristol), Janine Michael (CSE)
- Secretariat** Reem Khreishah (BCNP) – minutes, Hannah Roddis (BCNP)

ITEMS	ACTIONS
Welcome, quorum & declaration of interests	
No new declaration of interest. Meeting is declared quorate. Two public observers in session.	
Welcome to new members	
Welcome to Cara Clitheroe, attending for Victoria Barenova, representing North Somerset Council.	
Minutes of last meeting & action register	
<p>Minutes of last meeting approved and signed off.</p> <p><u>Action Register:</u> Outstanding items discussed as agenda items. Please see updated action register.</p> <p>Roy Kareem sent apologies as he was unable to join this meeting to update board around outstanding actions. Updates on actions for Roy Kareem and EDI group will be incorporated in July Board meeting agenda.</p>	<p>Action: Hannah Roddis to add actions for Roy Kareem and EDI group to July agenda and send invite to Roy Kareem, Nina Skubala, Vicki Woolley, Emma Geen and Olivia Sweeney.</p>
Updates & Discussion	
<p>One City Climate Strategy - Update from Alex Minshull:</p> <p><u>Mission Net Zero (MNZ):</u> Project officially starts on 1 March using the Innovate UK funding. This project seeks to add resource and capability to work under the wider mission approach developed through the One City Climate Strategy.</p> <p><u>Transition Team:</u> This is a group of actors and organisations with capability and capacity to deliver the One City Climate Strategy. Partners have been meeting in a series of workshops to create plans for how to decarbonise different areas of work, with high level actions that can form the delivery plan sitting underneath the One City Climate Strategy. First workshop tackled heat, and current workshop focuses on electricity systems. Following workshops will tackle two themes at a time with a focus on waste & transport.</p>	

Alongside the city scale plan, Innovate UK resource enables work at the regional and community scale:

Regional scale: developing regional piece of work with Combined Authority, Unitary Authority and National Grid looking at what infrastructure is needed across West of England to decarbonise the region.

Community scale: working with Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership (the Partnership) and Bristol Energy Network to recruit three communities, to work on detailed community climate investment planning.

- Expression of interest (EOI) call has opened. Hannah Roddis to share EOI comms with the Board to promote this.
- The Partnership will lead coordination of the EOI process and CSE will lead the main support package for the communities.
- Intend for selected community organisations to be announced in the 1st week of May.

Project aims to have a suite of community, city, and regional plans by Autumn, leading to work on securing financial investment and supply chains to deliver these plans.

Discussion:

- Board highlighted excitement for shift to delivery and amount of capacity the project will bring.
- **Do you foresee a need to direct finite money, effort, and resources to areas where these will make more of difference in terms of impact of decarbonisation? Or is the expectation that cities must look at all elements?** This varies depending on scale of approach. At community level, will begin with the question of what communities want to see happen and how do institutional actors from various sectors enable this to happen. Within this there is the dialogue with communities around informing and enabling communities to make the right decision for their neighbourhood which includes the question of what would make the most impact. At a regional level, there will be a more technical economic approach, directly around what infrastructure is needed.
- **Any colleagues from Bristol Waste Company attending these workshops?** Yes.
- **Currently do you have specific asks for board engagement?** Not at this stage. As detailed timeline becomes clearer, it will be helpful to bring the resultant city plan and regional plan to the Board for feedback and critical review.
- **Can you share timeline for the Board, BACCC and others to plan into our schedules?** Yes, Alex Minshull to share with Board when it is ready.
- The plans will go through three advisory groups (as part of evolving governance model): BACCC, Community Leadership Panel on Climate Change, and Net Zero Investment Board.

BACCC - Update from Jo House and Enda Hayes:

Climate and Ecological Emergency Plan: Recent meeting regarding how to progress the Climate and Ecological Emergency plan and will continue to move this forward.

Action: Hannah Roddis to share MNZ EOI comms with Board for sharing with their networks.

Action: Alex Minshull to share MNZ timeline with Board and BACCC when it is ready.

Connections with universities on data collection: Increasing discussion around collaboration between universities and natural history organisations:

- Natural History Consortium had a meeting at the University with partners.
- WECA met with the four regional universities and nature organisations.

BACCC’s upcoming work programme:

- Colleague Mark Thurstain-Goodwin has been leading on a data evidence gathering programme. Workshop for this took place last year and is now being written up.
- Discussions around alignment between Ecological Emergency Strategy and Climate Strategy; how to find ancillary benefits and avoid trade-offs in place.
- Supporting Alex Minshull’s work on Mission Net Zero.
- Proposal for working group on heatwaves, drought and flooding to be put in place and taken forward; thinking about this from the perspective of data, as well as communities, organisations and the vulnerability for the city and how this might feed into the Keep Bristol Cool framework.
- Engagement with other boards; opened conversations with Children and Young People Board and Health and Wellbeing Board.

Discussion:

- BACCC are receptive to the Environment Board’s input around BACCC’s work programme, in terms of current plans, what comes out of the City Gathering and any resultant changing priorities.
- Environment Board invited to let BACCC know of any significant plans that BACCC can build into their meeting calendar for the upcoming year.
- BACCC hopes to get City Leap presence at a future meeting.
- Offer to Board members: if their organisations/individuals would like a critical review of a specific initiative or programme, they can get in contact with BACCC, who will support if they have capacity.
- Discussion around BACCC’s engagement with other boards:
 - BACCC was invited, in their conversations with other boards, to identify and feedback areas where Environment Board could be collaborating.
 - Helpful for Environment Board to feedback to other boards that climate and ecology is critical in all areas of work. This will enable BACCC representatives to engage more valuably with the other boards.
 - Discussions around best ways for BACCC to engage with Boards. Suggestion that Boards go to BACCC with specific queries. After City Gathering has taken place, there will be more time to look at link up opportunities.

Action: Board to share significant plans with BACCC Co-Chairs Jo House and Enda Hayes to be built into their schedule for upcoming year.

One City Ecological Emergency Strategy - Update from Savita Willmott.

Working Group: The three-year implementation project related to the launch of the Ecological Emergency Strategy has successfully concluded. The Working Group attached to this has therefore closed. Savita Willmott and Ian Barrett will still be representing the strategy with Alex Minshull and are focusing on next steps.

Goal 4: Our Wider Footprint: This will be a large focus moving forward and includes a piece of work on nature and business at West of England level. Two parts to this: one around

wider footprint: how supply chains and purchasing affect biodiversity. Second around nature in the West of England, and how City Partners can collaborate on the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy: Approaching formal consultation, will be leading on a programme of amplification and community engagement to raise awareness of and participation in the consultation. Will ask for Board’s support in this.

Festival of Nature: This will take place between the 1 – 9 June 2024 across West of England. During the Festival, the Wildlife Index will be launched and possibly the Tree Strategy among a range of other projects. There will be a Nature and Business strand of professional events running throughout the festival.

Collaboration with Universities: This will be around nature recovery and connecting people with nature. Partners are discussing how to create an innovative mechanism to connect up universities and other research partners in the region to support nature’s recovery.

Application to Defra’s Forest for the Nation: Now working with Forest of Avon Trust and Bath & Northeast Somerset Council on application for area of West of England, Wiltshire, Gloucester. This is a new competition where Defra will fund another national forest. It is a two-stage process, with the expression of interest due in 22 days, at which point Defra will select four areas for second stage of application. Key aspect of first stage are letters of support to demonstrate how this wider region would be nationally significant. Letters of support from the board and board members would be welcomed.

Discussion:

- Environment Board, BACCC and Universities are happy to send letters of support. Savita Willmott will draft template and share with further information.
- **Is National Forest linked to Avon Needs Trees crowdfunder?** Avon Needs Trees current crowdfunder is a specific opportunity in Lower Chew catchment fitting within landscape scale recovery project which is about 1500 hectares. This then forms key part of national forest bid. Avon Needs Trees work, from Defra's perspective, is very exciting because it the first woodland that has really taken off with high levels of community engagement. The National Forest bid will be looking to join up individual projects to make something of national significance.
- **Link to existing national forest?** Applicants are to be inspired and build on work of the existing national forest but not necessarily replicate this.
- **Forest research office near UWE could speak on partnership for training but perhaps need to be neutral?** They do need to be neutral, but the skills aspect is key in application and links to universities and city colleges are very strong around knowledge creation. Have also reached out to National Trust Research Department.
- **Need for recognition of underground services.** It would be helpful to consider the national map of utilities in planning process.
- **Any linking up to local plan and biodiversity net gain?** Any evidence that can be gathered around centres of excellence or areas of national significance specific to the region will add weight to the bid. Suggestion that Chew Valley could be a good place to start.
- **What are expectations for businesses and organisations around supply chains in terms of an end result and how to get value into that work?** Still at scoping stage at a

Action: Savita to send draft templates for letters of support and further information on the National Forest bid to the Board.

regional level. Looking at a dual approach; where can the greatest difference be made with largest supply chains and land but also that inclusive and more directed approach with key directives to give out. Would like it to be quite wide ranging, thinking about nature-friendly purchasing as more accessible terminology. Ultimately with the advice and programme to engage and support businesses directly.

Bristol Tree and Woodland Strategy – update from Richard Ennion.

Richard Ennion returned to Board to share updates from the revised Bristol Tree and Woodland Strategy, highlighting the following key points and revisions:

1. Tree Canopy target revised: In line with forestry commission recommendation, target has been revised to 20% by 2040 from 17%. Previous target of doubling tree canopy did not seem achievable, however, there will still be opportunity to double tree canopy in some wards with lowest tree canopy, retaining an aspect of this doubling narrative.
2. Taking action together section added. This aligns with One City approach and in order to achieve targets across the city as many actors as possible should be included. The strategy introduces actions, enabling people to understand what they can do at an individual, organisational, business, investor, and purchaser level. Although city-focused, the strategy reaches further to consider global context and actions. As there are global issues around forestry, it is important for purchasing powers, behaviours, and international contributions to be included and considered.
3. Invite statement from Chair of OCEB
4. Statement of support from key stakeholders
5. City tree canopy and Tree Impact Criteria maps

Discussion:

- **Does committing to 20% tree cover on development sites align with local plans?** This is beyond what the strategy can consider. There are many policies around how development should consider existing nature and should reflect opportunities for green infrastructure going forward. This 20% commitment is not built into policy and is a light ask, a consideration and an opportunity for developers.
- **Will you be asking organisations and developers to commit to this?** There is a lot of competition for green infrastructure alongside viability tests. It is tough to achieve an agenda within that complexity. This is an opportunity for developers to think about some metrics and targets and 20% is offered as a reference metric and opportunity.
- **How can the framework of Taking Action Together be embedded more strongly in the Local Plan to have more impact?** Local plan has been consulted on and is to be submitted to the inspectorate in March, meaning it is now largely fixed as far as Bristol City Council is concerned. Cannot see any policy that requires 20% passing national policy.
- In the Taking Action Together section, many of the last bullet points under Community Groups can also be applied across businesses.
- **Is there an opportunity to include some language in the strategy that looks to enable the biggest centre of population that there are opportunities beyond the boundaries of the city that would benefit from that energy and commitment? The story about how this links to wider area could be referenced in the National Forest bid piece.**

<p>Strategy is written as a nested approach with the overarching Forest of Avon plan and then what the city would like to do. For the National Forest bid, there are play-ins to this, particularly around heritage of trees in Bristol region with ancient woodland and one of the biggest populations of veteran wood pasture on edge of city from Ashton Court and Leigh Woods. This could create a strong narrative for the bid around tree heritage running through the wider region. Strategy does reference this in a limited way that could link into bigger thinking in National Forest ask.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion around including statements of support that Bristol residents enjoy trees and woodland outside of the city and therefore strategy supports initiatives led by others outside of the city which provide more trees in the wider region. Strategy does reference Woodland Trust which sets out access to woodlands outside of the city. • Does the strategy consider research that demonstrates that trees planted in certain locations can worsen air pollution particularly in cities and on streets where trees can hold it to the ground longer and not allow it to disperse? Does strategy consider where the trees are planted and how it relates to city changes and developments? Yes, aware of this research, Bristol will largely not be in this category. Although the strategy does not specifically refer to this research it will come into play under the strategy’s principle of ‘right tree, right place, right reason’. <p><u>Endorsement:</u> Request for Environment Board endorsement of strategy before April. Board members are at liberty to read through strategy and can send detailed comments by email to Hannah Roddis by end of next week. Will endorse by exception by email. BACCC feedback on strategy is on its way.</p>	<p>Action: Board members to email Hannah Roddis with any comments on the strategy by end of next week and vote on endorsement. Strategy will be endorsed by exception.</p>
<p>Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) – update from Roger Hoare.</p> <p>LNRS is a requirement in the Environment Act. The responsible authority for the West of England LNRS is the Metro Mayor Dan Norris. West of England Combined Authority (WECA) have been working on this LNRS for 18 months, building upon existing work, and working with Unitary Authorities and West of England Nature Partnership. The LNRS is a toolkit to help people to understand priority habitats and priority species in the region and will be an interactive map, which is currently being built.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents gone out to supporting authorities, Unitary Authorities and Natural England, last week. They have sight of proposed consultation which will go out for public consultation in about a month. • The toolkit will indicate priorities for nature recovery and measures recommended to support those. • The interactive map will enable people to identify their local green spaces and show the priority species and habitat for each area. The map will also show areas of focus for nature recovery. • From urban perspective, a key priority is around connecting people to nature. Have been working with landowners, businesses, and residents to understand what this means for them. • For Bristol, priority species have been hedgehogs and swifts and assemblages around Avon Gorge. 	

- For Bristol, areas of focus for lifting nature recovery exist around designated sites that exist already and expanding these, areas that will benefit people in marginalized communities as well as building corridors and natural corridors that exist currently.
- Currently set to be the first region to publish LNRS. This is a key piece of work from Defra’s perspective fitting with Biodiversity Net Gain and other tools to help both understand where we should be investing and helping investors and developers understand where they can make a difference.
- LNRS covers North Somerset as well and there is a responsibility to also link to neighbouring LNRS. There is support from Natural England and draft documents have already been shared with neighbouring authorities.

Discussion:

- **In the context of Bristol as city, is there assurance that Bristol will get fair share of attention from strategy?** Urban areas were identified early as key areas to work with. When working with the toolkit there should not be a divide and the same principles can be applied across all areas but the opportunities in each will be different.
- Suggestion that, in consultation phase, there is a need for clear language around what the toolkit is and what it isn’t to avoid it being taken out of context. Intending to share consultation information for board members to cascade out in a neutral way.
- Challenge around consultation is that interactive portal is not ready yet and instead have slide sets demonstrating how you might work through it.
- Discussion around possibilities for where other data sets can link into the toolkit in the future, such as potential for connecting up data on water and air pollution, pesticide strategy and various regulatory information.
- LNRS helps direct where Biodiversity Net Gain payments go. Various mechanisms help to encourage developers to invest their money, if they can’t get on site, as close to developments as possible.
- **There is evidence that shows that as areas are developed to be ‘greener’ this raises the cost of living there and prices out the people originally living in that area. What is the consideration around long-term impact of inclusivity in this and further strategy that goes alongside toolkit?** This should be part of the consideration and would love to have this as a challenge but not quite at this stage yet. Initially trying to get the data on the table to have the right conversations where we need to focus on nature recovery perspective. Ideally hope to reverse this change by improving all areas but not there yet.

Committee System – Update from Marley Bennett

This is Marley Bennett’s last meeting guaranteed to be here and as a cabinet member. Bristol City Council has elections in May and governance will be changing from current mayoral system to a committee system. This is different to the cabinet and leader model as well as mayoral model, it does not have cabinet members and does not have decision making formally delegated to individuals. Instead, there will be individual policy committees. Bristol will have the Environment and Sustainability Committee as one of the eight policy committees. Current expectation is that whoever becomes chair of this committee post-election will be the person representing Bristol City Council politically who

Co-chairs and attends this board. This is not set in stone and will see how this works in practice post-May.

Discussion:

- Policy committees largely mirror current One City Boards.
- **Could decision to continue with One City plan and Boards be overturned in future?** It could be overturned but optimistic this will continue post May. There is broad agreement from across Bristol political parties that this approach is something that they want to continue under the new system.
- City Office has a governance board made up of a range of city partners. City office is also funded by a number of those partners. City office do, of course, support Bristol City Council to remain a part of this but if support from Bristol City Council left post May, the One City Boards would not automatically be nulled.
- An advantage of committee system is that the Vice Chair of a committee can reliably attend a board meeting in place of the Chair if they are unable to attend themselves.
- Suggestion that a joint meeting early in the process between the new committee and Environment Board would be helpful to familiarise all the existing work of board with all new members of the committee. Agreement from Marley Bennett and Francesca Barclay.

Action: Marley Bennett to initiate plan for meeting between new committee and Environment Board post May.

AOB

- Marley Bennett: City Gathering is taking place on Friday 8 March. Request to Board for a female speaker to join in Ann Cousins’ place to speak on Board’s achievements since it began. Savita Willmott offered to speak. Francesca Barclay to set up a call with Savita Willmott, Marley Bennett and Ann Cousins ahead of the gathering. BACCC success can feed into this. Board members encouraged to join the gathering and invite colleagues.
- Katherine Piper: Festival of Sustainable Business is taking place on 14 March. This is a hybrid conference including seminars on various topics. Katherine Piper will send out an invite via email and welcomed Board members’ support to share with their networks.
- Francesca Barclay: Request from international team at the Council and twinning association based in Bristol’s twin city Beira, Mozambique. The team is looking for contacts with expertise around oceans and clean seas and any links to City to Sea. Enda Hayes and Jo House have contacts and Francesca Barclay will email both with request.
- Hannah Roddis: City Leap are publishing their business plan next Thursday and have asked if the Environment Board would like a statement and briefing note when this is published. Board agreed they would like to receive this.

Action: Francesca Barclay to set up a call with Savita Willmott, Marley Bennett and Ann Cousins to discuss speech ahead of City Gathering.

Action: Katherine Piper to send Board invite to Festival of Sustainable Business.

Action: Francesca Barclay to email Jo House and Enda Hayes for oceans and clean seas contacts.

Action: City Leap to share statement and briefing note with Board when their business plan is published.