

Wiltshire & Swindon Local Nature Partnership Board

Draft Terms of Reference¹

1. Purpose of the LNP Board

It is important that the LNP Board is representative of a diversity of sectors and is able to collectively take a strategic overview of sustainable development priorities, with the natural environment at the heart of their decision making. The board will need to integrate new thinking on the value of the natural environment and the services it provides, into the work of other organisations and agencies.

The Board will require influential strategic thinkers. Their role will be to agree the vision and objectives of the LNP and ensure that this vision is communicated to wider decision makers across a diversity of sectors.

The Board will provide the strategic direction for the LNP, initiating action and delivery through the working groups (supported by the secretariat). It will agree short, medium and long term priorities and objectives of the LNP. The Board will monitor progress achieved against the agreed objectives. It will also provide guidance and advice on securing funding to deliver agreed priorities.

In summary:

- Bring together a diverse range of individuals, businesses and organisations at a local level to create a vision and a plan of action of how the natural environment can be taken into account in decision making.
- To ensure that the natural environment of Wiltshire and Swindon is preserved and enhanced as a result of sustainable development.
- To understand the natural environment and the challenges facing the restoration and enhancement of biodiversity across Wiltshire and Swindon.
- To provide advice and guidance to the LEP promoting the natural environmental contribution to sustainable development.
- To take a strategic view on the restoration of ecological networks, and the preservation of ecosystem services and function.
- To develop a plan for the restoration of ecological networks based on a landscape scale approach.
- To promote and develop in conjunction with the LEP a Green Growth Strategy.
- To develop and promote the principle of 'A Natural Health Service' working alongside the PCT, facilitating the health benefits derived from access the natural environment.
- To identify bold and innovative solutions to help the natural environment achieve the objectives set by the LNP.
- To identify ways of funding those solutions.

¹ Final Terms of Reference are to be agreed by the board during the first meeting of the board on 19th September, 2012.

- To seek to influence government policy at all levels to address the actions needed to achieve the best potential outcome for a sustainable natural environment.

2. Representation of the LNP Board

It is proposed that the Board comprises 12 members, including a chair with each member agreeing to represent a sectoral interest and/or geographical area, not a single organisation. To ensure that this is achieved Board members should be at a senior level within their organisation and have sufficient experience to represent multiple interests. Board members representing Government agencies and funding organisations will attend meetings as non-voting observers, providing balance and perspective to local decisions.

The membership of the Board is anticipated to be as follows:

- The two local authorities representatives within the LNP area – Wiltshire and Swindon
- a conservation/NGO representative
- a farming/agricultural representative
- a business/LEP representative
- a health and wellbeing representative
- a representative from the energy sector
- a representative from the planning/development sector
- a youth representative
- a representative from a college/educational institute within the LNP area
- One representative from a Defra arm's length body – observer status
- One representative from a major funder – observer status??

3. Operation of the LNP Board

The LNP should be steered by a small, agile but representative board. It is expected that the Board will meet twice per year to set strategic direction and monitor progress. Board members should not be restricted to their individual views but those of the wider sector that they represent.

An official nomination process will be promoted in April 2012, inviting potential candidates to nominate potential members. A previously agreed committee will be responsible for appointing the Board, this committee will potentially comprise of the WSLNP Steering Group plus one independent member. The proposed Board will be confirmed in May 2012. If the application to Defra is successful then the Board would be officially invited to be established from July 2012 onwards.

The Board will be accountable to all partners at an annual LNP Forum, all major decisions such as agreeing the work plan for the next year will be approved and working groups will be given the opportunity to update the wider forum on the progression of the delivery projects.

4. Business Arrangement of the LNP Board

Board appointments:

Of the 12 Board members one person will be nominated as a Chairperson for that annual period. The Chairperson on behalf of the Board will represent the Wiltshire and Swindon LNP at national network meetings/events. The Chair will also provide guidance on behalf of the collective board to the secretariat and working groups where appropriate.

A Vice Chair will be appointed to act in the Chair's absence.

The Board will attend the biannual meetings and the annual forum on a voluntary basis.

The Board members will be expected to assist with the challenge of securing funding to sustain the LNP especially the coordination role that will play a vital role in driving forward the development and progression of the LNP.

Terms of Appointment:

Chair: 1 year plus 1 further year

Other Board members: 1 year plus 1 or 2 further years

Normal practice: 2 terms of office as a maximum

Issues that will need to be agreed though not necessarily in this document:

- Where a vote is required- simple majority with casting vote for Chair
- Quorum for meetings shall be eight Board members
- Terms of Board appointments
- Appointment (other than LA members) to be made by a nominated committee (sub set of the Board plus an independent member)