

Meeting of the Natural Cambridgeshire Shadow Trustee Board,

6 October 2020 at 3pm

Present

- Councillor Lina Nieto, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Councillor Pippa Heyling, South Cambs County Council
- Matthew Bradbury, Nene Park Trust
- Daniel Pullen, RSPB
- John Torlesse, Natural England
- Tim Brietmeyer, Landowner
- Peter Landshoff, Independent Trustee
- Sarah Smith, National Trust
- Richard Astle, Athene Communications
- Rebecca Britton, Urban and Civic
- Martin Baker, Wildlife Trust
- Adrian Cannard, Combined Authority (Adviser)
- Chris Bowden, Independent (Adviser)
- Roger Mitchell, Independent Trustee
- Cameron Adams, Environment Agency (Adviser)

Apologies

- James Littlewood, CPPF
- Kirsten Bennett, Cambs ACRE

Summary of action points

1. Need to consider best methods of engaging with landowners and farmers - All
2. Finalise Trustees of the charity – All
3. Produce job description for partnership co-ordinator/manager – RA
4. Circulate details of MPhil placement opportunities – RM
5. Finalise statement on development in Green Belt – All
6. Finalise agenda for partnership forum on 14 December – RA and PL

Discussion and actions arising

1. Review of the **Natural Cambridgeshire event on 16 September** – generally felt to have been a positive event with good attendance and engagement. Some concern that there had been a focus in the questions and the subsequent media coverage on the possible mis-match between the doubling nature ambition and the economic growth agenda. We need to be clear that Natural Cambridgeshire does not see these as mutually exclusive agendas, provided nature is put at the heart of decision making.

2. Following on from the event, the board agreed that we needed to consider how best to **engage with landowners and farmers**, who would be key to the delivery of the Doubling Nature agenda. This will be considered at the next meeting of the shadow board.
3. Roger Mitchell reported that NC had responded to further questions from the Charity Commission about the **application for CIO status** and that he hoped that all questions had now been answered.
4. There was discussion of the **current membership of the board** and whether there should be additional representation from any groups, given the three current vacancies. Gaps were identified from the local authorities in the north of the county and from organisations engaged in looking at issues around water supply and usage. There was also a recognition of the need to look at issues around the diversity of Trustees. This discussion will be finalised at the next meeting.
5. **Finance** – South Cambs, ECDC and the County Council have kindly committed to £5K grants each to support NC in this financial year. This would provide the ability to recruit a partnership co-ordinator on a part time basis. We will approach all the remaining Councils and Combined Authority to see if we can increase the total resource available. RA will produce a job description for the role. Roger Mitchell also agreed to circulate details of the MPhil placement scheme at Cambridge University as potential for further resource.
6. It was agreed that NC should adopt a policy position on the green belt around Cambridge. The following draft is under consideration, any further comments are invited by 9 October.

Natural Cambridgeshire fully supports the existing policy status of the green belt, that development will be permitted only in exceptional circumstances and recognises that it will be for the local authorities to consider and agree when such circumstances arise. As a partnership we will not support any proposals for removing land currently designated as green belt, leaving that decision to those authorities. Where a case is being made that such circumstances exist, we would urge developers and policy makers to ensure that for any land removed from the green belt, by applying the principle of biodiversity and environmental net gain, there is a similarly exceptional compensatory creation of nature rich habitat and publicly accessible open space that helps the delivery of Natural Cambridgeshire's Doubling Nature ambition.

Individual partners who are part of Natural Cambridgeshire are of course entitled to develop and support projects that do involve the removal of land from the green belt but we would expect them to make a very strong case for how such proposals help Double Nature.

7. There was a discussion of the **agenda for the Partnership Forum on 14 December**. Suggestions included updates from the Climate Change Commission; from one of the five landscape projects (perhaps the Cambridge Nature Network); about local nature recovery strategies, water quality and Environmental Land Management Schemes. It would also be useful to talk about the Future Parks Project and progress with the UNESCO Biosphere. Cllr

Nieto also introduced NC to Andrew Browne MP, who is chair of the All-Party Group on the Environment as a possible speaker. Partnership forums will be scheduled for the second Tuesday of every third month thereafter. RA and PL to finalise agenda.

8. Date of next meeting of the Shadow Board of Trustees – Monday 2 November, 3pm by Zoom.

Minutes prepared for approval of the Shadow Board by Richard Astle on 6 October 2020.