



**Steering Group Meeting
Draft Minutes**

**Thursday 7th Feb 2008
GOWM, St Philips Place, Birmingham**

Present:	Mike Kinghan (WTs) (Chair) Dave Haslam (LBAPs rep) Chris Blakeley (WMRA/LGA) Jeff Edwards (WMBP) (mins) Mike Wilkinson (NE) Sarah Faulkner (NFU) Justin Milward (WoT)
Apologies	Kate Warburton (NT) Colin Wilkinson (RSPB) Amanda Pearce (FC&GO)
1. Minutes of last meeting and action points	<p>Actions from previous meeting not covered within the Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Heaton has agreed to resume as EA rep on the Steering Group and to chair the Climate Change sub-group. • LfL Prospectus launch to take place over the weekend with article in the Birmingham Post. Quote from Liam Byrne very useful, probably the first time LB has made any statement on biodiversity. • Regional coordinator's budget – No news on core funding budget. MW was not optimistic. <p>Other action points were to be picked up in the agenda.</p>
2. Report of LBAPs and WMBP joint meeting	<p>Minutes of meeting circulated – considered to of been a very positive and constructive meeting with some important proposals including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meeting (probably annual) between chair/vice-chair and LBAP chairs/co-ordinators required. • Increased LBAP contribution to regional partnership – 2 (or more?) representatives for a year. • Communications plan for WMBP to consider relationship with and advocacy required to support LBAPs and regional advocacy priorities for LBAPs need to be trapped. • List of regional priorities and local projects needs to be drawn –up and

	<p>agreed between LBAPs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with LBAPs required when preparing work plan for WMBP for 08-09. • Engagement plan for other agencies. NE and WMBP Chair to use influence. • New Framework for England Biodiversity Strategy delivery to be used and regional response needed <p>In addition the LBAP coordinators met last week and they would like an additional rep on the Steering Group.</p> <p>Action 01/08 – JE to coordinate invitations to additional LBAP reps.</p> <p>EBG Framework consultation paper on the proposed structural changes to the delivery mechanisms for biodiversity had been circulated to those attending this meeting and also to the S/G members. The consultation deadline is the 29th Feb.</p> <p>The paper outlines the new PSA target changes puts NE as Defra lead for the EBS.</p> <p>The paper suggests changes in the way the national, regional and local structures operate and seeks; closer working between the EBG workstream groups and the HAPs and SAPs groups, closer working between regional and local partnerships, focus on habitats and ecosystems and more engagement between FC, EA and NE. It was suggested that the paper could give greater clarity on the regional and local dimensions.</p> <p>Action 02/08 JE to prepare draft response incorporating views of LBAPs for circulation/comment by 15th Feb.</p>
<p>3. Draft WMBP Work Plan for 2008/9</p>	<p>Initial draft work plan prepared by Jeff for discussion had been circulated. Much of the work is ongoing business carried forward from last years workplan but with a few new additional areas of work. Concerns expressed at the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive workload – is it achievable? • Do we need and can we service additional sub-groups • Need to project manage the large areas of work to understand resources and risks • Need to ensure achievements are communicated <p>Action 03/08 JE to review comments and circulate revised work plan for comment and discussion with MK and MW on the 15th April.</p> <p>Action 04/08 JE to prepare proforma for project management for the major elements of work and complete these in association with the sub-group chairs.</p>
<p>4. Conference & Full Partnership Meetings</p>	<p>Annual Conference Paper circulated for comment. The morning theme of environmental economy was approved. Suggestions for modifications to the programme included changes to the timing and format with Mark Pearce from AWM being proposed as the keynote speaker for the day. It was agreed that delivering the Habitat targets should be the afternoon theme with the 3 stat organisations and an LBAP rep. to give presentations.</p> <p>Full Partnership Meetings The following dates for the full partnership meetings were agreed for July 2nd & Oct 22</p> <p>Action 05/08 JE to progress with arrangements</p>

<p>5. Developing an Partnership Agreement</p>	<p>MW had circulated a paper and the steering group were invited to discuss the proposals and the draft partnership statement. It was agreed that the MOA was not required but that the existing draft ToR should be updated and finalised for publication. That there should be 2 categories of membership 'partner' and 'supporter' with partners contributing an annual fee/donation of approximately £500. LBAPs may be seen as an exception. MK suggested that we should aim to get this out for consultation asap with a covering letter requesting contributions from partners for 08/09</p> <p>Action 06/08 MW to amend ready for wider consultation.</p>
<p>6. Developing the Communications Strategy</p>	<p>Paper prepared by Martin Gershon from NE had been circulated for discussion. Range of communications activities need to be undertaken to progress the partnership's comms work. Suggested that meeting be arranged with partner organisations to discuss. MK & MW requested to be involved.</p> <p>Action 07/08 JE to progress</p>
<p>7. Biodiversity Pledge Update</p>	<p>WMLGA endorsed the Pledge at a meeting in Jan. It is intended to send this out a joint LGA/WMBP Pledge in the next 2 weeks following the distribution of the LfL prospectus.</p> <p>Lichfield DC has recently formally agreed to sign the pledge. 5 other authorities have also agreed that they are likely to sign, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, Herefordshire and Warwick DC. Joan Ruddock is to be invited to a 'signing ceremony.</p> <p>Action 08/08 JE to progress with arrangements for distribution Action 09/08 MK to prepare letter for Joan Ruddock</p>
<p>8. SIRS and the RBS review</p>	<p>Rose Poulter now seconded to AWM to oversee transition under the Sub National Review. SIRS possibly to be progressed relatively quickly. Reg, Bio. Strategy has been mentioned as one of the strategies to be subsumed in the SIRS but it is not yet clear what this will mean in terms of a review of the strategy.</p>
<p>9. LBAPs report</p>	<p>Attached for information. Everyone recognised the good work being carried out by the LBAPs</p>
<p>10. Budget</p>	<p>Paper circulated. Budget in reasonable state with a projected carry forward of c8k</p>
<p>11. Regional Consultations</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing Strategy now produced. Zena Lynch in charge of preparing a Delivery Plan.</p> <p>Economic Strategy – Delivery Framework out for consultation. While the natural environment is referred to in one or two action areas there is insufficient mention and the DF does not reiterate the WMES's natural environment as an underlying principal theme</p> <p>Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 11 Option consultation extended to June to consider Gov: request for even more homes to be built.</p> <p>Phase 3 evidence work to commence in April</p>
<p>12. WMBP Delivery Plan progress report And Progress report on the delivery of Defra/NE Core Services</p>	<p>Circulated for information – the work is progressing well with only a few areas of slippage.</p>

<p>13. Feedback from Regional Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - REP/REG & REG Monitoring Group - WMRAF - Regional Observatory - SWM Climate Change Partnership 	<p>Nothing to report</p>
<p>14. L&RSIG minutes to be circulated for information</p>	<p>Nothing to report</p>
<p>15. AOB</p>	
<p>Dates of next Meetings May 13th September 2nd November 25th</p>	<p>Paul Fisher to stand in for Chris Blakeley at next meeting</p>