

<h1>Meeting Notes</h1>		Meeting: Water Environment Governance Group	
Attendees: Richard Powell (Chair), Graham Dale, Melissa Lockwood, Anna Gerring Mike Madine, Clare Deasy, Stephen Thompson, Ruby Merriman		Date: 25/10/23	Location: MS Teams
Apologies: Mike Jeffries		Distribution: Attendees and Apologies	
Note: A full set of documents is available in the Water Environment Governance Group SharePoint Site https://nwgcloud.sharepoint.com/sites/TD0273/dcs/			
No.	Agenda Item and Notes		
1	Introductions Ruby Merriman was introduced to the group – New Bluespaces Delivery Manager based at Durham Wildlife Trust to support the NW Bluespaces Programme		
2	Review of Actions <u>Dickleborough site visit</u> Productive site visit. Bird ringing session same day. <u>North East Site Visit</u> Geltsdale in September – no members able to visit, but Richard has visited independently with very positive feedback ‘site looks amazing, high quality improvements’. RP also visited North Warren and said the improvements delivered there were a credit to the company. RP had sent info to CD previously.		
3	Water Environment Team Update Programme Update Overview provided by CD (see slide pack) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing note provided. • 26 projects delivered so far, 27 active projects. • PR24 plan submitted. • Bluespaces part of PR24 WINEP. Ambition increased for Bluespaces that will allow us to do more, but uncertain how future plans will be shaped. Was not considered for WINEP phasing, company did not consider that appropriate for the scheme. 		

	<p>Question asked over Kim’s replacement - Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust is the best option to partner for the role. Agreeing legal paperwork currently.</p> <p>Projects in Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some projects due a mid-term review. Includes year 4 and year 5 projects. • 45.6km forecast for year 4. <p>Projects in Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approvals likely in the new year for projects in development – 11 in total. • NW expects to gather more opportunities through new Bluespaces Delivery Managers – engagement has been reduced due to staff changes recently. • PR commented that Natural Flood Management projects in ESW may be opportunities for the programme.
4	<p>Project Approvals</p> <p>Wansbeck Riparian Corridor Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External project (no NW linked improvements) • 4.7km of improvements • Invasive species removal, woodland improvement, fish passage, improve balance between biodiversity and recreation, new eel pass • Match funding of £10,760 required by Bluespaces • Match funding also provided by EA and Parish Council • Priority area from customer research undertaken to support Bluespaces • Groundwork NE – partner worked with previously <p>ML – How certain is the unknown match funding? [ST- EA WEIF money is already in place]. Eel pass is complex. Recommends early engagement with EA around design.</p> <p>GD – ongoing maintenance of new structures should be considered. [ST- Legacy is being addressed by wider project. Council will take on responsibility of maintenance of infrastructure e.g. paths after project.]</p> <p>RP – Invasive species extent query. Discussion on invasive species control across regions. RSPB Flatford Mill – worth speaking to about HB control (Mark Nowers).</p> <p>DECISION: WEGG agreed to approve the Wansbeck Riparian Corridor Improvements project</p>
5	<p>Future Meetings</p> <p>3 meeting dates already in the diary:</p> <p>Jan 2024 –agreed meeting not needed in person, approvals will be requested online from the group instead</p> <p>21st May for year 4 sign off – needs to be re-scheduled so all members can attend</p>

6	<p>ACTION: CD to send out Doodle Poll to Reschedule 21st May meeting</p> <p>22nd October 2024 – group suggested it would be good to include plans for PR24 in this meeting</p> <p>AOB</p> <p>RP - Unsure whether Water Forum may continue. Question asked over the WEGG and its future: NW would like the WEGG to continue in some form regardless of the PR24 plans, as the internal company measure will remain linked to the pledge to improve 500 km bluespaces, and the group provides external assurance and support for the approach. A review of the group structure and terms of reference is likely to be needed.</p> <p>NE Catchments Hub – this new collaboration was presented to the group (see slides), enabled by a strategic partnership between NW and The Rivers Trust, and which Anna Gerring manages. Very positive comments were received from members all-round for this new approach.</p>
---	---