

<h1>Meeting Notes</h1>		Meeting: Water Environment Governance Group	
Attendees: Richard Powell (Chair), Barry Bendall, Graham Dale, Melissa Lockwood, Mike Madine, David Alborough, Clare Deasy, Laura Kennedy, Stephen Thompson, Kim Wallis		Date: 30/03/21	Location: MS Teams
Apologies: Mike Jeffries		Distribution: Attendees and Apologies	
Note: A full set of documents is available in the Water Environment Governance Group Teams Site			
No.	Agenda Item and Notes		
1	<p>Introductions</p> <p>RP confirmed that Mike Jeffries will be joining the group, however he had to send his apologies for this meeting.</p>		
2	<p>Review of Actions</p> <p>Item 6 on the Action Log was for the Water Environment Team to consider how funding partners’ resource costs might work within the AMP programme. This will be considered in proposals moving forward and the action will be retained as ongoing.</p> <p>Item 7 on the Action Log was for CD to set up a call with North East England Nature Partnership contact and invite RP. A response is awaited from NEENP. This will be picked up as part of planning in the next meeting as the feasibility study comes to a close, therefore the action will be closed off on the log.</p>		
3	<p>Kielder Year 1 Project Sign Off</p> <p>KW presented the evidence form for the project.</p> <p>Feedback and questions were invited from the group.</p> <p>BB queried the approach to monitoring and sharing outcomes across all projects. It was proposed to produce an annual report that can include evidence, statements and photographs of completed projects. This could link with the requirement to produce a report for the Water Environment Group. It was also suggested that a section could be included in the Water Forum annual report, reporting on projects delivered and providing an indication of the forward plan.</p>		

	<p>ACTION: RP to speak to Sarah on The Water Forum and CD to speak to Ross Smith regarding inclusion of a section in the annual Water Forum report to include progress in developing the approach, performance, ODI monitoring and outcomes.</p> <p>ML suggested it would be useful to link back to the customer research infographic in the reporting to show the link between what customers asked for and what has been delivered. This idea was well received and will be included in planning the report content.</p> <p>GD queried the description around the reward claimed in the evidence form (in relation to ODI penalty). CD clarified that the reporting for length claimed will be done on at a programme level moving forward and that the section will be amended.</p> <p>ACTION: Water Environment Team to amend the reward claimed section in the Kielder Evidence Form and recirculate to the group.</p> <p>RP asked whether the group were happy to sign off the Kielder Year 1 project. All agreed to sign it off.</p> <p>DECISION: The group formally signed off the Kielder Year 1 project as delivered with 12km water environment improved.</p>
4	<p>Year 1 Position</p> <p>CD presented the Year 1 Position table, including the four projects approved by the group and 30.2km forecast of water environment improved once all these are delivered.</p> <p>The table will be updated to include the project at Kielder which has been signed off in the meeting.</p>
5	<p>Looking Ahead</p> <p>MM provided an update on the NWG business position for Year 2 of the programme.</p> <p>In light of the financial pressures faced, the decision has been taken to invest only £50k in Year 2, linked with achieving the performance commitment of 10km. There is however still the opportunity to deliver more through well planned, strategic investment. If possible, the team would like to ring-fence this £50k for external partnership working.</p> <p>The proposal for Years 3-5 is still being developed and will be presented to the Executive Leadership Team at the end of May when the feasibility project ends.</p> <p>The group shared that the outcome was disappointing given the potential of the approach to deliver innovative benefit for the environment, however they accepted the constraints that the team needed to work within. It was felt the group could lobby to promote the approach wherever possible.</p>

	<p>GD queried whether this was a decision for Year 2 only. MM confirmed this was the case.</p> <p>ML queried whether the £50K commitment was in addition to the approximately £50K of reward reinvestment required from Year 1 performance. In the rules of the ODI, NWG are bound to re-invest a minimum of 50 percent above costs in new projects. MM said it was the same commitment, with £50K to be invested only. In future years, NWG hope to invest more, however it needs to be balanced with financial pressures, and will be dependent on the strength of the plan developed to the end of May for Years 3-5, performance in Years 2 and beyond and the reward reinvestment commitment, and decisions will be taken in future years as the approach matures.</p> <p>MM shared further examples where NWG work in partnership on other environmental projects including Branch Out, and stressed that Water Environment Improvements ODI is not the only approach through which NWG improves the environment. It is also hoped to make this scheme bigger in AMP8 as this is supported by customers and stakeholders and planning is starting for PR24.</p> <p>CD presented an update on the pipeline of opportunities – 650km of opportunities have been identified, with 200km of candidate projects in development. The team are developing around 60 opportunities into candidate projects. A draft plan for the remainder of the AMP needs to be shared for internal review by the end of April. The plan will then be presented to the WEGG on the 26th May.</p>
6	<p>Projects Discussion</p> <p>The Water Environment team shared detail and maps of potential projects to discuss with the WEGG.</p> <p>Areas aligning with WINEP schemes – Billingham Beck example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that whilst partners had been asked for ideas, this was open at the time and not specifically related to areas of investment in AMP7. • It was felt that it would be good to approach partners to understand opportunities in these specific areas to make the WINEP improvements accessible and identify where ‘above and beyond’ investment could be made. • The group supported projects in these areas to make improvements delivered through WINEP more visible. • MM queried whether this would include expanding what is currently accessible – it was felt the more access the better, so this could be included as an approach. • MM queried whether the scheme was constrained by AMP (e.g. could an AMP7 WINEP project be used as part of an AMP8 water environment improvement project?). CD noted this is something we would need to look into, including how this could link with the project legacy scope of the WINEP schemes. • BB felt it would be good to make the WINEP approach less rigid. MM shared an update on nature-based solutions work for WINEP schemes, and also the approach of the WINEP taskforce – hoping to move to a more outcome-based rather than output-based approach and focus on partnership working. Nature-based solutions may be more likely to stretch across AMPs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that there is a need to test this question with Ofwat. The WEGG’s recommendations should carry weight in the development of this bespoke performance commitment. The multi-AMP approach would also allow for longer term ambitions to deliver on customers’ expectations which would be very positive. • The team agreed to work up the WINEP opportunities further as part of candidate project development and bring them back to the group for review. <p>Capital project opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These opportunities would need to fulfil two criteria in their own right as they are not building on existing water quality or biodiversity investment. • Examples at Marden Quarry and Hawthorn Dene were shared for discussion. • The WEGG were asked whether focus should be on WINEP schemes or if capital project opportunities should also be considered. • The group felt that it would be great to look at both opportunities, though it was noted that there is a need to be realistic on expectations given the funding available. • It was felt that it would be good to see the details of the project pipeline, including a breakdown of costs and other details, then it would be possible to give more of a steer on prioritisation of different types of project. It would be better to have a large number of projects to review than to exclude capital project opportunities. • GD noted that the requirement for all project managers to consider legacy could be quite powerful moving forward and should be encouraged. Project managers could scope initial ideas to put forward, then work up opportunities further with the Water Environment Team. • CD welcomed the steer and noted that some flagship examples that had been developed and are considered deliverable would be good to share with project managers. The team are already working with project managers on this.
7	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign off for the remaining two projects will be required prior to the next WEGG meeting, so this will be done via email. KW will prepare the packs for these. • The team (MM) are presenting to The Water Forum Environment Sub-Group this week (1st April), and steer was sought on what should be included in the pack. RP advised including information on the customer research, summary of the signed off projects, information on the scale of opportunities and a forward look to the AMP8 ambition. A number of WEGG members are on The Water Forum, but the final presentation will be circulated to all members for info. <p>ACTION: CD to circulate the final Water Forum Environment Sub-Group presentation to the WEGG with the meeting notes.</p>