

River Wye Nutrient Management Plan Board

4th December 2017, 2pm-4pm

Committee Room A, County Hall, Powys County Council, Llandrindod Wells,
Powys, LD1 5LG

Attending

Cllr Philip Price	Herefordshire Council (Cllr P)
Kevin Singleton	Herefordshire Council (KS)
Samantha Banks	Herefordshire Council (SB)
Rob Widdicombe	Herefordshire Council (RW)
Dane Bloomfield	Environment Agency (DB)
Jenny Gamble	Environment Agency (JC)
Claire Minett	Natural England (CM)
Mark Rychnovsky	Welsh Water (MR)
Richard Pitts	Powys CC (RP)
Cllr Phil Davies	Powys Council (Cllr D)
Mark Riches	CLA
Cathy Meredith	Rural Hub (CMe)

Apologies

David Letellier	Natural Resources Wales (SM)
Kevin Bishop	Herefordshire Council
Richard Gabb	Herefordshire Council
Sarah Falconer	NFU (SF)
Nick Read	Brightspace Foundation (NR)
Dave Throup	Environment Agency (DT)
Simon Evans	Wye Catchment Partnership (SE)

Observers

Ian Jardin	CPRE
------------	------

Notes

1. Introductions & apologies – Chair
Cllr Price gave known apologies and introductions. Welcome to member of the public attending.
2. Notes of the meeting of.

Notes agreed and signed by Cllr Price

3. Monitoring “dashboard”.

DB introduced the Monitoring dashboard. Dashboard has been divided into management units to aid transparency. Now includes targets and maps of sample points. Separated regulatory farming data from advice information. Included Welsh water information.

This will be placed on the Herefordshire Council website with the other Board information.

DB – dashboard will be updated annually.

Cllr D – requested that a link is added to the Powys website – **Action for RP**.

Cllr P – query on 2017 soil run off incidents. DB – generally awareness has risen and being reported, doesn't mean there were more incidents.

Labs test the results to check why spikes are happening – it would be speculation to try and guess as to why there are particular spikes at certain points.

DB/CM - Welcome the public querying and questioning the results and the graphs. Engagement is positive and key.

DM – Prolonged elevated p levels are the issue rather than natural spikes and variations. Need the scale of the variations to reduce.

CM – the use of the dashboard is for the Board to understand the impacts of the NMP Action Plan and that the information is there for the Board.

Cllr P – do some of the smaller rivers feeding into the Wye contribute more P?

JG introduced the monitoring project for P in a cross boarder catchment basis. Continuous P monitoring to look for peaks and understand where they may be coming from. Monitoring - temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, pH, ammonium, conductivity, phosphate, rainfall and flow.

Been monitoring for two months but no significant rainfall in that time. This will provide continuous data rather than sampling.

DB – alarms are set to be notified of spikes at any time. The system is expensive therefore not across the whole catchment. If it is successful may choose some sample areas within the Lugg catchment. This will allow us to understand the sources of P and target actions.

CM – welcome it on the Lugg. Could this be used to improve monitoring of P?

DB – probably not, it's more understanding sources and it's too expensive for wider roll out.

Cllr P – this combined with the work of Farm Herefordshire should help to reduce p levels.

KS – have the 2017 housing data, should that be on the dashboard?

DB – at this stage using the 2016 data. **Action – to arrange dashboard update schedule and board meeting to agree updates.**

RP – housing figures for Powys should be available at the same time.

Cllr P – congratulated those involved in the dashboard and associated works.

Email received from Simon Evans at the end of the meeting provided additional comment upon the dashboard.

4. Update of work of the TAG group to review of the NMP action plan. Action Plan amendments were discussed. Need to reflect on what should be included within the plan.
- New rules for water quality will come in in April and the next phase of the WW plans will be announced. So update from Action Plan should await this future information. Next meeting of TAG is scheduled for January 2018
- Action: schedule for update of the Action Plan**

5. Update from WCP

Update email received from Simon Evans during the meeting indicating:

- A 2nd soils group is being established in Herefordshire. The 1st group was instrumental in WUF's and farm Herefordshire's work to date. The 2nd group will help more farmers move to the 'Vanguard'.
- We are getting some traction with business through the Courtauld 2015 group.
- Work continues with farmers in England in a range of projects funded at last count by 9 different funders (EA and NE play an important role, but also a couple of grant-giving trusts, Severn Trent water, Dwr Cymru, Enforcement undertakings and not least the farmers themselves)
- In the summer we worked up £2.48m of mid-tier applications to fund
- Successful in a couple of partnership EOI's to work with farmers in the Ithon and Llynfi and are now working up the full bids.
- The Water Environment grant being developed for England could be a game changer as could the new rules for farming if the EA enforce that with the same vigour as they have been with the safeguarding soils projects.
- Work in East Herefordshire has enabled clearer understand of problems with the Frome.
- Still are concerns about Free-range poultry, the Ithon and the Trothy/lower Wye
- The 2017 spring algal bloom was the worst for at least a decade.

6. Farm Herefordshire update

CMe – funding for 2018 and business plan being put together. One soil discussion group with young famers in Golden Valley. Rural Business advice day has taken place. Building evaluation into the work programme to discover if farmers are changing behaviours. Soils event in January with Holme Lacy College. Stewardship schemes: 100 business applied, 60 endorsed in Herefordshire. Undertaking some good practice events.

Cllr P – planning policy for yard work – need to look at the work being done by Farm Herefordshire, is there a simplified way of addressing this in planning?

Action – MR to provide some examples of other LPAs if possible

7. Update from DCWW
Planning for PR19. Modelling of Wye and the Lugg for possible best value site investments for AMP7. 13 sites may need further investment but these need further investigation.
Will be some consultation on PR19 through the customer group and the environmental regulator.
8. Update from local authorities.
Powys – working on LDP to adoption. Hearing in spring and summer and consultation on matters arising consultation. An additional hearing in January regarding renewable energy and hopefully adoption in spring.
Trying to address issues with NRW regarding poultry units.
Inputting into the dashboard and ensure it has a balance within the information for Herefordshire.
Herefordshire – continuing to work on a suite of Development Plan Documents including Hereford Area Plan, Mineral and Waste Local Plan, Rural Areas Site Allocation DPD and Travellers DPD.
Government directions is now on delivery rather than supply and there may be opportunities for grants to bid for infrastructure improvements if it would unblock housing delivery.
9. Joint Powys/Herefordshire Member seminar.
Possibly after the adoption of the Powys LDP and Powys have a number of new members.
Action: KS and RP to discuss possible dates for seminar and location of the meeting.
10. Questions from the public.
Ian Jardin outlined the work that had been commissioned by the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership. Used publically available raw data and turned into graphs and mapping of sampling points.
Used a 12 month moving average for trends.
Only 5 points were within the NE ceiling for phosphates but 2 years ago there would have been 11.
There weren't so many spikes between 2010 and 2013 at Victoria Bridge in Hereford. Is there a reason for this?
DB – work is useful and valid and a rolling average is useful. Points on dashboard are a trend line of the 12 month average. Spikes are often associated with seasons, 12 month periods allow for this variance within them over influencing them.
Work of Farm Herefordshire will take time to show within the monitoring due to the sink of phosphates which will continue to leach.

LNP dashboard explains what we understood when work was being undertaken on the NMP.

Will take the LNP dashboard and see if there are any areas of the dashboard which would be improved as a result.

Action: DB and CM to review dashboard with any agency statisticians (if available).

DB - Phosphate data for 2009 to 2012 was probably not monitored during this period but would need to investigate if required. But monitoring programmes do change.

11. Dates of next meeting

June 2018 in HARC, Herefordshire

12. AOB

None

Web link to the NMP Action Plan:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nutrient-management-plan-river-wye>