

Notes:

River Wye Nutrient Management Plan Board

10th January 2017, 2pm-4pm

Herefordshire Record Centre, Rotherwas Hereford

Present

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)
Dave Throup	Environment Agency (DT)
Simon Evans	Wye and Usk Foundation (SE)
Mark Riches	CLA (MR)
Claire Minett	Natural England (CM)
Mark Rychnovsky	Welsh Water (MR)
Nick Read	Brightspace Foundation (NR)
Steve Morgan	Natural Resources Wales (SM)
Sarah Falconer	NFU (SF)

Agenda

1. Apologies

Perry Hobbs	Welsh Water
Richard Pitts	Powys CC
Peter Morris	Powys CC
Kevin Bishop	Herefordshire Council
Richard Gabb	Herefordshire Council

2. Notes of the meeting of 4th October 2016.

Pg3 item 5 a short wording change was made to the text.

Item 8 actions will be arranged for March.

The notes were agreed as a reflection of the meeting.

3. Monitoring “dashboard” update

DB – further progress has been made. Awaiting a couple of data sets. The TAG Group will review the datasets and create the indicators. This should be available by the next meeting.

Indicators will be reported on a Red, Amber, Green traffic light system covering key elements such as funding, development control, capacity, WW AMP programme, farm engagement.

For those who want more information there will be links to explore more details but this will require more work and it should be recognised that it will be data that can be updated annually.

NR – they are developing a tool for Herefordshire which will link to the underlying data automatically.

After a discussion regarding the frequency of reporting it was agreed that the dashboard should be updated on an annual basis to provide a high level direction of travel, linked to the Nutrient Management Plan.

The targets are based upon annual averages and are best reported as such with the TAG group should be reporting to the Board if any issues arise between the annual updates. The dashboard will work alongside the Action Plan which will show progress and activity.

Cllr P – considered there was a need for some commentary to explain to interested parties which an annual approach to the dashboard is appropriate.

DB and NR are developing a briefing to be read alongside the dashboard to set the context.

SM – need to clarify the purpose of the dashboard – the narrative is important. It was acknowledged that the main purpose of the dashboard is to enable the Board to take a view on the issues and actions but is also evolving into providing information for general public. However, there was a danger that the dashboard would be used to make comment on specific planning proposals, which was not its purpose.

NR – it would be possible for those groups with an interest to be involved in the process through establishing a Data Governance Group.

SM – questioned whether there could there be a scrutiny session around the indicators on the dashboard?

Cllr P – indicated that it was important that the dashboard information was robust in order to stand up to scrutiny.

4. Update of work of the TAG group to review of the NMP action plan.

DM – TAG group had begun to review the Action Plan and its actions. This is still working progress at the moment and more consideration is needed on any new actions to take place. It is likely to take 2 more TAG meetings prior to a full report to the Board.

KS – Indicated that in the review work undertaken to date it was clear that many of the original actions had been entirely or partially completed.

5. Update from Wye Catchment Partnership (WCP)

SE –WCP continues to progress. The Partnership meeting in December had sought to collate current work and identified there were around 60 initiatives underway. For example:

- ERDF bid to be determined at the end of the month and this includes SUD work
- EA working on water protection zone potential

At the meeting Dr Paul Withers from Bangor University gave a presentation upon main sources of phosphate, provides an explanation of P cycling, ecological impacts and control strategies. He indicated that research undertaken found that P leaches at 2 units where there are little organic matter or clay. As a result a programme had started to test and map organic matter in soils and the potential to help address actions for farmers. Additional videos and presentation on Farm Herefordshire

WCP need to produce a plan by March for DEFRA and the NMP will be included within this. WCP will become more focused in the future on funding streams.

WCP is also beginning to look further upstream particularly in Powys and awaiting the completion of the Powys Development Plan.

6. Farm Herefordshire update

NR – Farm Herefordshire is at a crossroad, 11 organisations working together but there is a need for additional resources. A co-ordinator post is required and a need for advisors in order to follow up with farmers who have shown interest at events.

It would also be useful to develop a database of the farmers in Herefordshire and where they are on the management of soil and water in order to map incremental changes and target actions which would allow for some monitoring and evaluation to show progress long term.

DT – this is a fundamental part of the NMP and need to invest to ensure progress continues especially the Farm Herefordshire brand. Therefore keen to see this continuing.

NR – Farm Herefordshire is unique in the way 11 organisations have combined under a single brand.

Cllr P – is there a place where future of this aspect of farming can be discussed in Brexit

NR – As Farm Herefordshire is not an organisation in itself it will only make comment if all organisations reach consensus. However, Farm Herefordshire could help deliver post-Brexit outcomes. It may also be possible for Farm Herefordshire to act as host for a conference or event should there be consultation regarding the approach to Brexit.

7. Update from DCWW

- The project to re-line the Yazor Brook sewer was now complete and monitoring was now ongoing to see if the impact of the scheme has had in reducing the load at the works and effectively increasing headroom.
- Ongoing WFD investigations to update the SAGIS model for apportioning Phosphate in the Wye and Usk catchments. This will help identify where investment will take place for the next AMP period.
- Phosphate Pilots on the treatment works across the country. DCWW have been trialling “fuzzy filters” in Ross on Wye due to report in March. Full report back in June with other trials across the DCWW area and wider trials.

SM – welcome work of DCWW but asked whether anything was being done regarding bio-solids?

DB – Indicated he was aware that some work has been commissioned on this issue.

ACTION: MR to speak to Perry Hobbs to inform the Board with regards to the impact and approach to bio-solids.

8. Questions from the public

No members of the public present at the meeting.

No questions have been posed by the public and there have been no follow up on the previous public questions.

9. Dates of future meetings

Board meetings 6 monthly would allow the TAG work to progress. Agreed to hold 6 monthly meetings.

Provisional date: Monday 5 June 2pm

10. AOB

SM - useful to provide an update on the situation in Wales at next meeting.

SE – Powys CC development plan to expect to be published for examination at the end of March

DB – Enforcement undertaking - £170k from Heineken regarding a fish kill on the Widemarsh Brook. Money will go into the wider river catchment.

DB – DFRA funding some flood management projects. EA had been successful in bids for £600k over the next three years for Herefordshire. This will be managed by Herefordshire Council through the Local Flooding Risk Management Strategy which will be published soon. A further £1m was available for partners to bid for flood risk management projects.