

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Informal Meeting of Nutrient Management Board Members and Advisors

26 April 2023

An Informal Meeting open to all Nutrient Management Board (NMB) voting members with advisors from the statutory agencies was held on 26 April 2023.

The purpose of this meeting was for the statutory agencies - Natural England, Environment Agency, and Natural Resources Wales – to discuss the Herefordshire Council Cabinet Commission report proposals for River Restoration (2nd March 2023) and hear views from other board members present at the meeting.

The discussions sought to:

- maintain momentum by gaining clearer perspectives on the range of views about the Council Cabinet Commission report
- improve understanding of how the proposals made fit with the remit and responsibilities of each body
- begin to shape future joint proposals to progress restoring the Wye Catchment
- allow a fuller discussion and wider public debate at the next formal public meeting of the Nutrient Management Board.

Those present recognised that the NMB would benefit from increased strategic cohesion between the agencies and councils and discussed how this could happen. The emphasis was on how all parties could improve delivery of actions to achieve the stated outcomes, better understand the issues that are viewed as blockers, and plan for short, medium and long-term actions.

Informal soundings were taken on which governance arrangements would enable the NMB to be more effective in delivering the Nutrient Management Plan, which in turn enable clear proposals to come to a formal meeting of the Board.

No decisions were made or formal business undertaken, but the greater clarity and insights shared will be drawn upon to inform development of proposals and future decision-making.

The chance to meet was welcomed by all attendees. It reaffirmed the commitment to collaborate in addressing the central environmental, social, and economic challenges that require sustainable immediate and longer-term solutions.

Response to Media Enquiries

No media release or announcement is planned for this meeting, as it was an informal discussion, a private meeting not held in the public domain.

Explanatory Notes

- The purpose of the Informal Meeting is purely a preparatory exercise to inform members and advisors for the subsequent formal meetings of the Nutrient Management Board after the local council elections in May. Representatives and board members of Herefordshire Council, Natural England, Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales, Powys Council, Monmouthshire Council, Forest of Dean Council, DCWW, Farm Herefordshire, National Union of Farmers, the Country Landowners Association and the Herefordshire Construction Industry Lobby Group attended it.
- The meeting was hosted by Herefordshire Council and coordinated with the lead bodies the Environment Agency and Natural England who invited the HC Chief Executive, Paul Walker to chair the informal session (Herefordshire currently holding the NMB chair). This arrangement was made because of the impending local council elections in May 2023.
- The meeting was held in private as the Councils and all the agencies are bound by pre-election restrictions that apply to councils from 6 March 2023 in the preparation of the forthcoming local elections on 4 May 2023.
- The next NMB will be held on 28th June and the public will be able to follow on a dedicated You-Tube channel

Clare Dinnis – Environment Agency (Lead organisation)

Claire Minett – Natural England (Lead organisation)

Ann Weedy – Natural Resources Wales (Lead organisation)

Paul Walker – Herefordshire Council (Host organisation)

Further media enquiries to be directed to:

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