

# Bath & North East Somerset Council

## Strategic River Group

16<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Kaposvar Room, Guildhall, Bath

### Minutes

**Chair:** Cllr Ben Stevens (B&NES)

**Present:** Louise Fradd (B&NES), Simon Martin (B&NES), Dan Green (Wessex Water), John Wilkinson (B&NES), Richard Rutter (CRT), Kelvin Packer (B&NES), Geoff Dunford (TRRT), Cllr Dave Laming (B&NES/TRRT), Tim Hewitt (B&NES), Cathryn Humpries (B&NES), Sarah Allen (Avon Fire & Rescue Service), Graham Sabourne (B&NES), Colin Rees (B&NES), Zoe Hancock (Wessex Water/B&NES)

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Apologies</b> Mark Minkley (B&amp;NES), David Crowson (EA), Matthew Smith (B&amp;NES), Alison Howell (Natural England), Emily Price (B&amp;NES)</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Minutes and actions from 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Item 2- SM arranged a meeting with the CRT which was held on Mon 17<sup>th</sup> Nov</li> <li>• Item 3- MM has invited CH to attend the SRG meetings</li> <li>• Item 3- MS to ensure an email update is circulated to the SRG after each Safety Group meeting- CH will follow up this action</li> <li>• Item 4- RR in ongoing discussion with SM and Emily Price regarding operational agreements of river railings</li> <li>• Item 4- Emily Price/SM have supported the work of the Safety Group to develop pilot trial of lifesaving devices</li> <li>• Item 4- ZH has met with EA Flood Risk Team and B&amp;NES Flood team, ongoing research in to potential flood alleviation options across the wider catchment will hopefully be picked up by Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership</li> <li>• Item 4- DC has sent ZH the Somerset Levels PES study</li> <li>• Item 4- JW has met with the TRRT and considered the role of the TRRT- will report back later in the meeting</li> <li>• Item 5- ZH will present a draft outline of the River Strategy at this meeting</li> <li>• Item 6- Communications Plan has not been progressed; need to define the details of the River Strategy and Action Plan before developing this work. ZH in discussion with Savita Custead from Bristol Natural History Consortium regarding the Festival of Nature 2015 opportunities</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ZH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ZH</b></p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Discuss and review Draft River Strategy &amp; Action Plan</b> Draft River Strategy &amp; Action Plan was circulated prior to the meeting. -It was agreed that the River Strategy should only cover the geographic area of the River Avon Corridor flowing through the B&amp;NES stretch of the catchment. Other rivers and streams that drain into the River Avon are not</p>	

	<p>included but may be added in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To help avoid confusion with other existing river strategies the name was further defined to: “B&amp;NES River Avon Corridor Strategy”</li> <li>-The SRG agreed with the five overarching themes and agreed a few key outcomes need to be developed for each theme.</li> <li>- It was suggested that the ‘Safe &amp; Active Communities’ joined up to the Health Agenda more closely</li> <li>-Need to address River Safety Issues and improvements in a more coordinated way- feed into the Strategy in the future</li> <li>-It was suggested that the ‘Sustainable Transport Networks’ was renamed ‘Sustainable Networks’ and incorporated Transport, Energy, Green Infrastructure, River Traffic, etc</li> <li>-The Group agreed that need to develop specific outcomes for each theme- need to demonstrate value for money, adhere to key policies and deliver improvements to the River Corridor</li> </ul> <p><b>Action-</b> All SRG members to send suggested outcomes to ZH by end of January to be considered before the next SRG meeting.</p> <p><b>Action-</b> ZH to develop a mind map of the all documents/strategies already influencing the River. This will help to identify who is delivering different actions and how they need to all pull together. Research the potential for developing a ‘Knowledge Hub’- capture all key documents in one accessible place with a glossary</p> <p><b>Action-</b> ZH to update the Governance Structure- need to understand where funding is being prioritised and add an Appendix- identify all key groups. The SRG provides a high level forum for recommendations, this is not a decision making group. The SRG need to report back to the scrutiny panels and provide an overview of all activities and actions being delivered along the River Corridor.</p> <p>-Capture the following groups that are currently not referenced: Housing Scrutiny Panel, Corporate Gypsy &amp; Travellers Group, Tourism and Leisure, Health.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>All</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ZH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ZH</b></p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Update on Sustainable Transport Fund (STF)- Colin Rees</b></p> <p>Colin provided a brief presentation on the proposed Bath Riverside Path Upgrade in the section of the River (Nelson Place to Midland Bridge). Funding has been secured from the Local Growth Fund to deliver improvement to transport networks in the B&amp;NES area.</p> <p>Need to ensure that STF is aligned with the RoSPA report recommendations (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents). Also maybe consider alternative ways of improving the path, for example, RR suggested flexipave surfacing material opposed to traditional paving.</p> <p>The Group agreed that also need to develop a strategic brief to provide steer on how sustainable transport fund can be best spent to deliver multi beneficiary outcomes for future developments within the Enterprise Area and deliver appropriate environmental river improvements</p> <p><b>Action-</b> CR to attend the Enterprise Area Working Group and align STF projects with ongoing project developments</p> <p><b>Action-</b> CR to join up with River Safety Group and ensure projects being developed via the STF align with Safety recommendations</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CR</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>CR</b></p>

5	<p><b>Discuss River Dwellers Scrutiny Report</b></p> <p>A summary of the Report was circulated before the meeting. The Group discussed the lack of evidence available regarding the boat dwelling community; need to understand the inequalities that boat dwellers face so can respond adequately. Currently no B&amp;NES policy/guidance on boat dwellers.</p> <p><b>Action-</b> GS to ask Housing Scrutiny Panel for report completed previously- already have an evidence base to start from.</p> <p><b>Action-</b> If required improve and expand evidence base to enable B&amp;NES to develop appropriate guidance/policy for boat dwellers</p> <p><b>Action-</b> ZH and RR (CRT) to organise a meeting in January to go through voluntary code and make sure fit for purpose, also consider how appropriate moorings can be incorporated within the planning system via Placemaking Plan process. Need to include B&amp;NES planning team, Ann Robins &amp; Graham Sabourne, CRT including new Welfare Officer</p> <p><b>Action-</b> DL to circulate Oxford Council Boat Dwelling Policy</p>	<p><b>GS</b></p> <p><b>ZH/GS</b></p> <p><b>RR/ZH</b></p> <p><b>DL</b></p>
6	<p><b>Updates from the Task Groups</b></p> <p><b>River Safety Group- Cathryn Humphries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-There have been 4 deaths in River Avon in 2014 and at least 2 rescues</li> <li>-November 2014- B&amp;NES involved with Pre- inquest review, further inquests in Jan 2015 for other river related deaths</li> <li>-Now have a functioning multi agency River Safety Task Group, supporting various projects along the river to improve safety including: prototypes of vandal proof cabinets are being tested and will be piloted in 2015, student led campaigns, fencing along high risk areas of the river.</li> <li>-Need to improve evidence base and understand why people are ending up the river so can respond appropriately.</li> <li>-ZH now part of River Safety Group, looking to align delivery of safety mechanisms with other projects along the river</li> <li>-Also working with Karen Renshaw (B&amp;NES) incorporate measures with lighting strategy for protecting bat habitat</li> </ul> <p><b>River Corridor Fund- Tim Hewitt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Grant to Minerva Bath Rowing Club has been granted (£42k)</li> <li>-Grant to TRRT still being scoped, need to understand if the £100k will enable the building to be safely restored</li> <li>-River railings near Widcombe Lock are progressing and will be implemented soon</li> <li>-River Greening Trial- awaiting tenders for work- 17<sup>th</sup> Dec</li> <li>-Options Appraisal Study for Radial Gate has completed for Phase 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Action-</b> Tim to circulate updated report to SRG via ZH</p> <p><b>The River Regeneration Trust update- Dave Laming/Geoff Dunford</b></p> <p>TRRT is moving forward as an independent social enterprise with two functions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A strategic advisory role to the SRG</li> <li>2. A consultancy service that acts as a conduit between landowners and B&amp;NES. TRRT will be setting out terms with each client that 1% of the development cost is provided as a contribution towards improving the river. TRRT is not acting on the Council's behalf in</li> </ol>	<p><b>TH</b></p>

	<p>this role, but offering an independent advice service for a fee to developers.</p> <p>TRRT have recently signed up two clients related to project proposals adjacent to the river.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<p><b>A.O.B</b></p> <p>No items raised</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>It was agreed that the SRG meetings would be moved to quarterly meetings held in March, June, September and December</p> <p><b>Action-</b> Dates will be circulated for 2015</p>	<b>ZH</b>

### Summary Table of Actions:

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Action Detail</b>
Item 2	Cathryn Humphries	Circulate summary notes after each River Safety Group to the SRG
Item 3	All	All SRG members to send suggested outcomes to ZH for consideration of River Strategy
Item 3	ZH	Develop a mind map of all relevant strategies/plans and research a knowledge hub
Item 3	ZH	Update Governance Structure
Item 4	Colin Rees	To attend the Enterprise Area Working Group and join up work with the Sustainable Transport Fund
Item 4	Colin Rees	Join up with the River Safety Group when developing and delivering STF projects
Item 5	Graham Sabourne	Identify previous report on boat dwellers produced for Housing Panel
Item 5	GS/ZH	If required improve and expand evidence base to enable B&NES to develop appropriate guidance/policy for boat dwellers
Item 5	RR/ZH	Organise meeting in January with CRT and identified partners to consider incorporating appropriate moorings with B&NES planning team
Item 5	DL	To circulate 'Oxford Council Boat Dwelling Policy report' to SRG
Item 6	TH	To circulate update report of the River Corridor Fund to SRG
Item 8	ZH	To confirm meetings dates for 2015