



## **TVNP Briefing Note**

### **Partnership Resilience and Future Funding**

**Revisions: 20/11/18, 6/12/18, 13/12/18**

#### **1. Purpose of the report**

Update partners and funders on the current position of TVNP since the HLF Resilient Heritage Review concluded in October 2018. Identify immediate challenges and opportunities regarding funding the partnership.

#### **2. Outcome of the Resilient Heritage Review**

Extensive consultation across the partnership in 2018 resulted in a draft Business Plan which identifies 13 objectives and associated activities. There was an initial verbal commitment from current sponsors that further funding would be awarded 'on production of a robust business plan'. The first draft was duly presented to Tees Valley Combined Authority Management Group (comprising of one director from each of the 5 Tees Valley local authorities and the Senior Management Team from the Combined Authority) on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018. Feedback included:

- a. there didn't appear to be a thread between the 3 themes and the 3 ambitions and it would be useful to see how they join together;
- b. the group questioned what was being done to ensure TVNP are sustainable going forward if local authority money was not available;
- c. the document didn't appear to answer a couple of important questions – what are you trying to achieve, what does success look like, what is the vision?

The feedback has been addressed in the revised draft. This has been sent to Hartlepool Borough Council as Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods has been appointed as the point of contact with TVNP.

The future resilience of the partnership is closer but still not assured. A deeper examination on future funding has been initiated to address this fundamental issue. Further details on the funding situation are explored below.

#### **3. Future Funding of TVNP**

The current three-year funding commitment from TVNP sponsors ends in March 2019. Following the meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> October there has been a verbal commitment from the chair of



the group that a further years funding to March 2020 would be awarded. TVNP are awaiting confirmation of this.

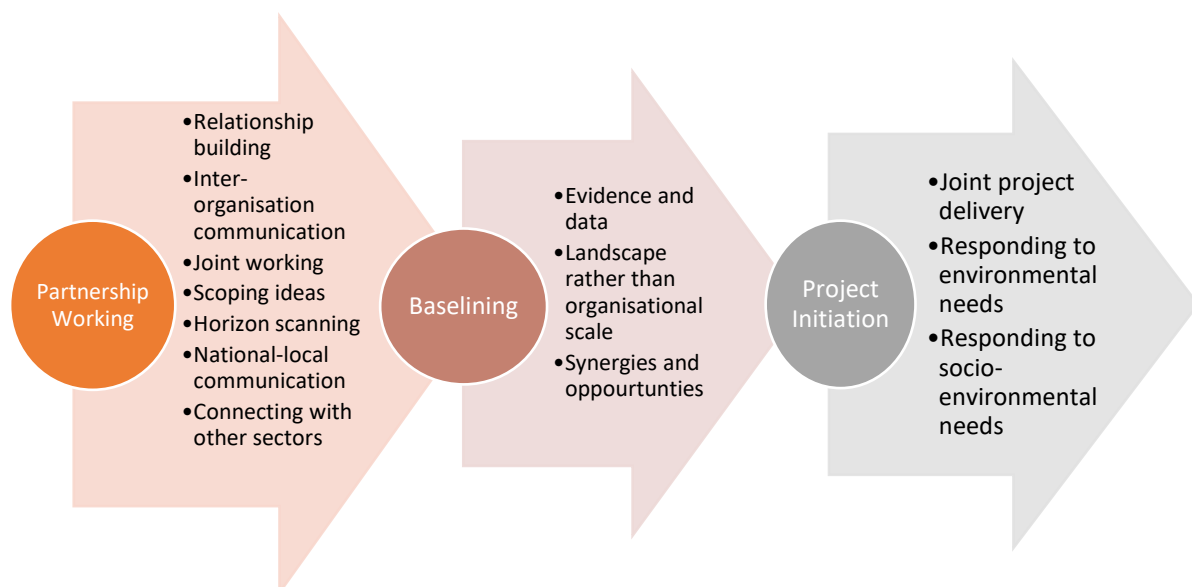
During October and November 2018 one to one conversations between the TVNP Manager, partner organisations and the TVNP Chair have been undertaken with a group conference call on 19<sup>th</sup> November. The following points have been raised:

3.1 Defra (the government Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs)

initiated Local Nature Partnerships (LNP’s) in 2012. LNPs are referred to in 2018 government publications: 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). There is Defra support for LNP’s via the Local Delivery Team who are also responsible for local delivery of the government 25 YEP but to date Defra have not awarded funding for LNPs.

3.2 Defra have commissioned Collingwood Environmental Planning Ltd. to undertake an evidence project on the local delivery of the 25 YEP. A focus of the research is examining how local economic, health and environment partnerships can collaborate on local delivery of the plan. There is strong evidence that LNPs are already delivering parts of the 25 YEP at a local level. The project ends in March 2019 and will hopefully give the evidence needed to argue for some central funding for LNPs something that the network of LNPs continue to lobby for.

3.3 The TVNP is primarily a strategic body not a project delivery organisation. The work of the partnership is a critical ‘behind the scenes’ initiating stage before project delivery can take place.





3.4 It is notoriously difficult to get funding for strategic work as there are few tangible outputs that attract funding organisations.

3.5 The partnership has however generated some outputs including the Local Plan Assessment for Nature and Biodiversity, Biodiversity Opportunity Area maps and statements and the annual Tees Nature Conference. The new business plan has also identified some further outputs for the next three years.

3.6 The Environment Agency, Natural England (both within Defra) and the Tees Valley Combined Authority have all offered in principle project funding with the understanding a proportion could contribute towards management overheads. The value of such projects identified in the business plan however is small and would not generate a significant amount of additional funding.

3.7 Organisations that rely on generating their core-funding solely from ‘top slicing’ project funding are potentially very vulnerable to the changing funding climate. A lot of resource can be spent on chasing funding with less available for actual delivery especially non-income generating strategic work.

3.8 The partners have identified some services that TVNP could develop into an income generating stream. As with ‘top slicing’ this income could not be relied on to generate all the core funding needed to sustain the partnership.

3.9 The additional funding streams could however be used as match funding and to fund smaller projects within the partnership’s ambitions.

3.10 Some seed corn funding would be needed to test and ‘set up’ some of these services. The suggested services are set out below.

Service	Details	Comments	Estimated annual value
<b>CPD for Planners</b>	Nature/biodiversity/GI training accredited by Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)	LA training budgets	Tbc
<b>Conferences &amp; Training</b>	Charge for commercial organisations to attend and/or provide sponsorship.	Need additional marketing resource	Tbc
<b>Support Services</b>	SLA with Your Tees Catchment Partnership to provide support	Align with YTCP in business plan	Tbc



	services (administering meetings, promotion etc)		
<b>Annual environment awards</b>	Would need commercial sponsorship to run. As with other projects a 'top slice' could be taken.	Very human resource intense. Link to conference	£8K*
<b>Polluter Pays</b>	Companies that do not meet their environmental compliances can opt to pay to relevant 'good cause' rather than a fine.	Need assistance from regulators to broker this.	Tbc
<b><u>Capability North East – GENEE membership &amp; Investors in the Environment</u></b>	<a href="#">North East England Nature Partnership</a> (NEENP) are now hosted by Capability North East. Income generated through CNE funds their LNP. See paragraph below.	How could this work with the INCA model?	tbc

\*Based on Durham Environment Partnerships awards scheme.

3.11 The partnership discounted ecological services as this is clearly being offered already by INCA one of the partner organisations.

3.12 Income generation as suggested above changes from year to year and is not always guaranteed. A minimum level of core funding is needed to sustain the partnership to assure continuity of delivery and staff retention.

3.13 One suggestion is that local authorities could underwrite the core costs? This would have to be on a payback of unspent funds model rather than claim at the end of the year as TVNP does not have enough cash flow.

#### 4. In detail – aligning with the North East England Model

The North East England Nature Partnership (NEENP) undertook a Resilient Heritage Review a year prior to the TVNP. They are effectively a year into their ambitious and unique model which is set out below.

Capability North East, which covers the whole region including the Tees Valley has been set up as a business offering environmental services and 'GENEE' (Greening the Economy of North East England) packages. They are the regional brand holders for Investors in the Environment, a national environmental accreditation scheme. They also offer Natural Capital & Biodiversity plans and Environment Design Review 12.



Financial surpluses after operating costs which includes servicing the NEENP will contribute to the Capability Environment Fund, a fund specifically for the North East to enable landscape scale enhancements that benefit nature and people.

Capability North East are the hosts of the NEENP, employing the secretariat that supports it.

NEENP have approached TVNP to align with them, three possible options are set out for the TVNP Steering Group to consider below:

Option	Outline	Impact for TVNP	Gain for CNE (NEENP)
1	Tailor then replicate key resources e.g. Guide for Elected Members	Additional resources. Need funding for this.	Fee for copyright & acknowledgement.
2	Link into Capability North East. Refer Tees Valley organisations to their services. Maintain separate and distinct LNP's	Generate income for TVNP & longer-term TV env projects. Join a north east brand. Create opportunities for INCA?	Extend client base. Heavy industry/ international Proportion of the fee.
3	TVNP secretariat merge into CNE. Maintain separate and distinct LNP's but pool resources. Efficiency of scale.	As above. Not reliant on public funding. Time diverted to income generation	As above. More resource (expertise & financial).

## 5. Next Steps

- a. Get confirmation from TVCAMG about 2019/20 core funding and indication of post April 2020 situation.
- b. Publish TVNP Business Plan post 19/12/18
- c. Pursue Big Lottery enquiry for funding assistance – expression of interest submitted follow up scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> January 2019  
<https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/partnerships-england>
- d. If appropriate develop alignment with Capability North East.