

September 2016

Rt Hon Dr Thérèse Coffey MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Defra, Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

Dear Minister,

I write to you on behalf of Local Nature Partnerships as signed overleaf which represent
% of the area of England, constituencies.

Many LNPs, and their constituent partner organisations, have concerns over the uncertainty posed by the result of the EU Referendum but also see the opportunity provided to refresh current thinking and approach. Partners are currently in the process airing these concerns and offering suggestions via the Environmental Audit Committees inquiry into 'Future of the Natural Environment after the EU referendum'.

In considering the implications of the significant changes ahead LNPs have considerable advantage over other partnerships in their very broad membership which – as their initial formation dictated – covers Defra agencies, land management / farming representatives, NGOs, Local Government, the health sector, academia and businesses.

LNPs have a unique perspective on how land use changes, as influenced by the economic and regulatory landscape, can ultimately impact people's wellbeing. Recent impacts of flooding being a visible and high profile example of the impacts of land use change.

LNPs can and do influence economic strategies produced by Local Enterprise Partnerships. We seek to ensure the natural assets / natural capital of an economic area provides societal and business benefits and are not degraded by poor investment decisions.

LNPs have the ability to oversee and generate local solutions within a wider national policy and financial context.

The relationship between LNPs and LEPs works well in many areas however the links with LEPs is usually informal and certainly not a requirement – despite clear and significant links between the economy and the environment.

To demonstrate a broad consultation on environmental policy at the right strategic level we would like you to consider instructing:

- LNPs to produce a base-line assessment of the environmental assets (Natural Capital) of their LEP area(s) listing which are declining (increasing business costs and risks and also resulting in societal losses) and which environmental assets offer opportunities - such as improved tourism or health gains.
- LNPs to provide formal oversight of the review of agricultural subsidies
- LNPs to provide advice on how agricultural subsidies and other environmental funding for environmental works are allocated within their local area.
- LNPs to provide formal oversight of the formation of the 25 year environmental plan.
- LEPs to use LNPs as an environmental sub-group who will act as a formal consultee, with powers of veto, on economic strategies and significant infrastructure projects. Handing over direction of LNPs to BIS may be required for this.

Given the significant progress LNPs have already made with no central government funding, we feel that a more formal, and funded, relationship with LEPs is key to dealing with the challenges ahead.

We would be happy to meet with you to discuss these ideas further.

Yours truly,

Adrian Platt
Chair of the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin LNP

Signatures from supporting Local Nature Partnerships are provided overleaf...