

101410292

Revision 01

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AWARDS PANEL

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Meeting:	6 th November 2024, 9:00-11:00
Location:	MS Teams
Chair:	Chris King (ESC)
Attendees:	SZC – Nick Stayt (NSt) – (Observer), Steve Mannings (SM) SCC – Richard Rout (RR), Tim De-Keyzer (TD) – (Observer) ESC – Chris King (CK) National Landscapes – Natalie Singleton (NS) – (Observer), Simon Amstutz (SA) Natural England – Kim Pearce (KP)
Apologies:	

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Meeting Notes:

Project Update (SM)

SM provided a project updating covering the following:

- Vegetation clearance and tree clearance at the main development site are ongoing, as well as earthworks in the ACA area. Unexploded Ordnance clearance is progressing.
- Approved Sizewell Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) clearance has been substantially completed.
- Trial activities are being conducted to inform detailed design for geotechnical structures to determine the best techniques considering environmental, engineering, and logistical needs.
- Bulk earthworks are progressing.
- Elsewhere archaeology advanced earthworks are progressing.

Terms of Reference

- The group reviewed the Terms of Reference and agreed to provide edits and feedback by November 14th. **Action – Panel members to provide feedback by the 14th of November**
- **Action - A Standard Operating Procedure document** will be prepared. This will be circulated for agreement and feedback by panel members within the next 6 weeks.

Appointment of the NEAP Chair

- The group voted on a 12-month rotation for Chair.
- RR proposed SA as the new chair which was agreed unanimously for the next 12 months
- **Key Decision – NEAP agrees to appoint Simon Amstutz to Chair panel over the next 12 months**

Additional core members

- NSt noted the group has the opportunity to add three additional core members to panel. NSt inquired if there are any suggestions for potential candidates, when they need to be in place and whether these should be additional members from those already represented. The group is to consider these points and provide feedback post-meeting. There will be an agenda item in the next meeting to refine thoughts on potential candidates.
- **Action – Panel to provide feedback on potential additional core members in next meeting.**
- TD emphasised the importance of bringing in local and specialist skills and knowledge to ensure the best use of the fund and to effectively target and promote it.
- SA inquired about the role of the Natural Environment Improvement Advisor. The new appointee will start in January 2025.

Natural Environment Improvement Fund (NS)

- NS has conducted stakeholder mapping and analysis using an influence-interest matrix, and is engaging with key stakeholders for future funding. This feedback will be incorporated into the communications plan. NS is undertaking opportunity mapping to target engagement with key stakeholders where there is most opportunity in landscape.
- Applicant guidance is being developed including Expression of Interest form, guidance document,

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application form, and assessment matrix. NS will be seeking feedback and approval for guidance at the next NEAP meeting.

- The Draft application page will be hosted on the Suffolk & Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape website and NS demonstrated the webpage's appearance and functionality.
- NS proposed a 13-week application cycle to cover application, assessment, panel preparation and funding award.
- NS suggested that it is proposed that the fund will be open continuously to applications, but there are specific submission deadlines to be considered at the next panel meeting.
- 2025 Pilot Phase (NS):
 - NS noted there would be a Pilot phase to gather feedback full rollout.
- Next NEAP meeting at the end of February 2025 to allow NS finalise preparations.
- NS presented options for funding amounts: either funding is capped per year of construction, or entirely available at once. SA suggested a model similar to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, where funding is not capped year, to ensure successful project delivery and consistent delivery of positive outcomes.
- Indicative timeline suggests three or four panel meetings a year for flexibility and shorter application cycles. SA and SM recommended three meetings a year.
- Next Steps:
 - **Action - NS to outline timelines and gather feedback from Panel member outside of meetings in preparation for launch.**
 - **Action - panel to discuss potential launch event in spring 2025.**

Branding

- NS proposed commissioning a logo to establish a unique identity for the fund, differentiate it from others, and represent multiple partners. This would enhance visibility and provide a lasting legacy beyond the fund's lifetime.
- NS sought feedback on commissioning the logo and funding options. **Action - CK to consult with East Suffolk communications team.** If further support is required, SZC communications team can be consulted too.
- Initial focus is on logo and colour palette, with potential for additional communication assets later.
- NS inquired about SZC's co-branding advice. **Action - SM to gather advice from SZC on co-branding guidance, and confirm whether SZC brand will be part of NEIF logo.**

Meeting Structure (NSt)

- Panel to consider including project updates as a standard agenda item, and determine optimal meeting length (e.g., 2-hour meetings, half-day sessions etc) and agree on the structure of the next meeting well in advance to ensure it serves as a stepping stone for feedback and sign-offs.
- The DoO requires reporting to the Environment Review Group, so panel need to consider the format and responsibility for this.
- SM proposed that panel can agree items by email which was agreed.

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- NS proposed a dashboard for summary of project updates to be available to panel members.

AOB

- NSt to share potential 2025 meeting dates

Actions raised during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
06/11/2024	1	Panel members to provide feedback on ToR by the 14 th of November	NEAP	14/11/2024
06/11/2024	2	Standard Operating Procedure to be drafted and circulated within 6 weeks of 06/11/2024	SZC	Next Meeting
06/11/2024	3	Panel to provide feedback regarding the additional core members	NEAP	Next Meeting
06/11/2024	4	NS to map out alternative timelines for NEIF	NS	Next Meeting
06/11/2024	5	Panel to discuss the launch of NEIF	NEAP	Next Meeting
06/11/2024	6	CK to consult with East Suffolk Communications team on the NEIF logo	ESC	Next Meeting
06/11/2024	7	SM to gather advice from SZC on co-branding guidance	SZC	Next Meeting

Key decisions made during the meeting:

Date	Ref.	Decision	Description
06/11/2024	1	NEAP Chair	Simon Amstutz appointed to Chair NEAP over the next 12 months

Author: Caitlin Murphy (SZC)