

Summary of CNP Interim Working Group (IWG) Meeting

Date of meeting: 04 August 2014

Venue: Royal Jersey Agricultural & Horticultural Society HQ, Trinity

Present: Andrew Terry (AT), Jim Hopley (JH), Mike Stentiford (MS), Dan Houseago (Dan), Nick Aubin (NA), Doug Richardson (DR), Ken Thomson (KT), Bob Tompkins (BT), David Hambrook (DH), Marc Woodhall (MW)

MW opened by providing a quick update on how we arrived at this 1st meeting and the role of the IWG to act on behalf of the wider stakeholder group. This is in line with the summary document on governance that represents the input of stakeholders from the 3 workshop process. (attached for info.)



Created National
Park Group...

1. Discussion had as to the extent that the CNP or the IWG might try to curtail existing activities and create layers of control and bureaucracy. What was the re-mit / responsibility of the IWG and any subsequent “CNP Group”? There was an acknowledgement that there were already a significant number of good initiatives underway within the boundary of the park and what the IWG needed to do was identify how else it would be able to add value. Opportunities for branding and use of the park in promotion, to include by Tourism, were cited as were the health benefits of outdoor activity and the potential for raising awareness and education of the very special qualities of the CNP. Questions about whether there was sufficient representation of for example Tourism and the Comité des Connétables on the IWG were voiced as was the issue of political engagement.
2. Dan took the opportunity to re-emphasise the distinction in the Island Plan between the existing development control policy in relation to the CNP (Policy NE6) and the requirement of the Island Plan for a Management Plan to be produced for the CNP. The role of the Gov’t with respect to the development of a management plan for the CNP has been to adopt a process that signals its genuine wish to engage stakeholders and remove Gov’t from being the sole instigators and implementers of a plan. The objective behind this is that it creates a Plan developed through the input of stakeholders for the delivery by stakeholders. Dan does recognise that Gov’t has an existing function within the CNP and this will remain but that Gov’t is just one stakeholder.

Citing the UK example Dan pointed out that National Parks were the successful result of the work of many organisations. Increased representation on the IWG was not necessarily the most obvious solution and that the IWG had an opportunity to influence other groups or engage as required to best serve the wishes of the broader stakeholder group.

Dan also expressed his view that the IWG and stakeholders shouldn’t get concerned about trying to deliver too much if that was a hindrance. There were in his opinion some obvious opportunities that would by their very nature trigger development of other initiatives; such as brand development & promotion.

3. JH suggested that we shouldn't be re-inventing the wheel in terms of a National Park and that we could use experience within the IWG of the UK set-up to for the benefit of the Jersey CNP.

JH shared his misgivings with elements of the process but he does understand the constraints that the process worked to. He did feel it was unfortunate not to have any female representation or Tourism representation on IWG and also felt there was a need for parochial involvement. He asked what were the constraints if any on the IWG to bring in additional members.

There was a group discussion about the opportunities that had been presented to all stakeholders to sit on the IWG and whilst some still felt there was lightness of representation the key point agreed on by all was the need for a representative from Tourism to join the IWG. There was a general discussion about the forthcoming changes at Tourism and JH offered to approach Tourism. They also have a new CEO and JH to raise the issue of the CNP with him.

4. Furthering the debate about representation DH raised the question about whether the stakeholder process has been politically naïve by not engaging politicians, particularly the Constables. Undoubtedly the Constables play an important role at various levels within areas of the CNP and there was a discussion about a possible role for them on the IWG. Some felt that Constables should be represented with others also questioning the position of the DoE Minister in relation to the CNP. The outcomes of this discussion in respect of Constable representation on the IWG is reflected in point 15.
5. Dan re-iterated the point that Gov't's objective wasn't to control this process. He pointed out that the benefit of this being a stakeholder led initiative was that Gov't were removed from their traditional role of control in favour of a more collaborative role. In saying that he felt that the IWG and stakeholders should recognise that they probably had an opportunity to do things differently, but that others would be watching with interest. It might therefore at this stage be prudent to not search for political representation but instead request it when it was needed by the IWG. Dan has a role in political management as part of his stakeholder contribution to the IWG and CNP process.
6. Dan re-iterated the difficulty in choosing the best options to be taken by the IWG, pointing out that if it was easy it would probably already be happening. There was general agreement with this. He proposed engaging National Parks in the UK to get them to inform / visit / speak to the IWG about the difficulties in balancing the wishes of Authority with the Management Plan and Organisations. He would be happy to action that.
7. AT agreed that this would be a very beneficial link to establish.
8. KT asked if there were Parks in the UK similar to Jersey. Not in terms of scale but geographically Pembrokeshire is very similar with a linear coastal aspect and others such as the South Downs are relatively recently established so approaching what they do with a possibly different approach.
9. Another discussion was had about the extent of prohibiting certain activities and what the role of the IWG was in this. The key message to emerge from that discussion was that there was a need to establish a balance and that everyone should be able to use the Park but enjoy wisely.
10. MS stated that he felt the biggest opportunity for the CNP was that of promotion. He feels a genuine sense of diminishing pride in Jersey and sees the fantastic opportunity that the CNP could provide in addressing these issues. MS offered to use his contacts, including those at the JEP, with regard to promotional work.
11. There was a general discussion about how promotion and logo development might happen. Initial thoughts were around keeping it simple possibly asking schools to

develop a logo using the JEP as a mechanism and using cafes, leaflets and other simple infrastructure (such as dustbins) to generate promotional opportunities around the CNP and embed the idea of the CNP in the public psyche. MS suggested that there was a definite need for a map that the public see. There was discussion around the pro's and cons' of using a professional agency: Con's included expense, time, and lost opportunity to engage the public. Pro's identify parameters for design of logo & brand, create a professional image (could be by using public created image), cover the need to reach multiple audiences.

MW clarified that Tourism and a number of stakeholders have offered their skills and resources, during the workshop process, to develop this work. The IWG should take advantage of these offers. They include amongst others Tourism, Jeff Hathaway, Martyn Farley, John Garton, Mike Stentiford. In addition most stakeholders accept the need to refer to / embed the CNP as broadly as possible across areas they are involved in. (See section 4 p17-21 of Workshop 3 report & section 5 p39-41 of Workshop 1 report).

The discussion on promotion moved to Plemont and questions on how the work there was going to develop. Was it in the CNP? Could it be? Did the IWG / CNP Group have a role to play in lobbying for this? Further on in the meeting there was also a discussion about commenting on the Rural Economy Strategy (RES) in 2015. The RES may provide an opportunity to establish the CNP as something of an economic hub. This possible role for the IWG / CNP Group as a stakeholder for the CNP will need to be discussed at later meetings.

12. AT stated he felt there were 4 key issues to be dealt with by the IWG: Governance; Communication; Budgets; Monitoring. He feels the IWG need to establish the boundaries / role of the group. There was some discussion about this but the IWG felt that these were difficult questions and that they needed to avoid the risk of over functioning. They also didn't have the answers right now. In terms of maintaining momentum maybe it was easier to concentrate on some initiatives that were simpler to deliver, in the likelihood that these would provide some answers to other key questions. Dan re-iterated the point that the IWG might like to hear the experiences of those from UK Parks and then re-engage with the governance questions. It may be that convincing people of the merits of the CNP Plan is more important than establishing authority, the latter won't come without the former.
13. JH suggested that some of these issues could be addressed through the creation of an association or charitable body. There are readily available templates and "how to" guides on establishing various types of body and that he would make enquiries as to the options available for consideration by the IWG. Questions of future funding were raised. Dan suggested that the Tourism Development Fund might be able to support specific CNP initiatives. In addition there might be some smaller sums that could be applied for at the DoE under existing work initiatives. Benefits of distancing the IWG / CNP Group from Gov't is that it may make it easier to target funding streams. Charitable status might prove a good route in this respect. JH offered to ask for advice from the Jersey Voluntary and Community Partnership in this respect. DR asked if you need legal involvement in this and are there costs. Dan suggested it may be possible to use SOJ Law Offices to support this. Dan raised the point about the IWG maintaining engagement with the broader stakeholder group (as it's part of their remit) and issues like this might be something for them to consider.
14. There was recognition that there were a number of actions that needed to be completed before the IWG members use their contacts to promote the work of the stakeholders and the development of the CNP – See Action list at end.

DH asked if the timetable for completion of the Management Plan was set in stone (as per Workshop 3 report Section 8. The answer is no. There is also no political deadline in respect of the CNP Man Plan.

DH would like the IWG to use future meetings to start looking at the Management Plan and Action Plan with a view to engaging the broader stakeholder group about more “controversial” issues before they are embedded in Plan. DH doesn’t want to disenfranchise stakeholders by just cutting workshop input out but there may be a need to identify issues that need further discussion with the broader stakeholder group. These will be brought back to the Group once identified.

15. DH offered to liaise informally with Comité des Connétables reps who meet in the RJA&HS, mindful of the fact that the IWG is not asking for formal representation on the group at present and mindful of the fact that they have been regularly invited and updated in respect of developing the CNP Management Plan.

Action Points:

Dan – Make approaches to UK National Park counterparts and organisations with a view to informing IWG members and the development of the Management Plan and CNP in Jersey.

JH – Approach Tourism to nominate a representative to sit on the IWG (possibly Donna Le Marec). Discuss with new CEO (Kevin Keen) the opportunities the CNP presents to the Tourism offering and also get from Tourism an understanding of what their offer to develop some background work in respect of branding and promotion might actually entail.

JH – To look into the options for establishing an Association / Charitable Organisation. To be able to inform IWG at next meeting.

DH – To hold an informal conversation with the Comité des Connétables / Secretary to let them know that the IWG is meeting and that the development of the Management Plan for the CNP is ongoing.

Any Other Business ; MW to arrange post the 3 workshop reports on-line (on gov.je website - for now). Will also make outputs of these IWG meetings available on-line for stakeholders in the future and distribute by e-mail in the meantime.

Next meeting Monday 8th September at RJA & HS (MW to liaise with DH in advance for confirmed access)