

NORTH DEVON BIOSPHERE RESERVE

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT 2014-2024

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February 2016

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1. Background

In November 2002 UNESCO, through the Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme, agreed the designation and extension of the World Biosphere Reserve, centred on Braunton Burrows but covering the entire river basins of the Taw and Torridge in North Devon and the marine area out to the 12 nautical mile limit. A Biosphere has three functions of conservation, sustainable economic and social development and education and research. The key document for the Biosphere is the Biosphere Strategy and Action Plan which directs the work programme to meet the objectives of the designation.

The Biosphere Reserve is designated by UNESCO at the request of the UK Government (it is an intergovernmental programme) and supported by the local community which is embodied as the managing partnership of the area. Each has a duty towards the designation:

- UNESCO for adherence to the principles and standards of the designation and the world wide network;
- UK government for domestic policy development and support for the Biosphere Reserves;
- The local partnership for operating the Biosphere; care of the assets; monitoring of the principles of the Seville strategy and subsequent strategies and plans for UNESCO

Until summer 2015, the governance arrangements were based on;

- Biosphere Partnership, comprising a wide range of local stakeholders
- Biosphere Executive of the Chair and key funding partners including the host authority for the Biosphere Team
- A number of topic related Working Groups

Following a review of this Governance and examination of a range of options for the externalisation of the Biosphere Team, all of which posed a number of issues, the Partnership in August 2015 agreed to form a wider, more inclusive, executive body, to be known as the Core Management Group, as a first step towards a longer term aim of establishing a separate independent entity for the Biosphere. In addition, it agreed a revised structure for a range of Working Groups to reflect the delivery of the new Biosphere Strategy for the ten year period up to 2024.

In considering these issues, it was felt to be an opportune time to review the Partnership Agreement as a whole.

2. Description of the Partnership

2.1 Name of Partnership

North Devon Biosphere Reserve Partnership known as the Biosphere Partnership

2.2 Type of Partnership and Term

The Partnership is unincorporated and non-executive.

This is a review and update of the previous Partnership Agreement to take account of some changes in Governance which were agreed at the partnership Meeting in August 2015. It is intended that the Agreement should remain in place to deliver the Strategy 2014-2024; however there will be a review at least once mid-way through this term to ensure the Agreement remains for purpose in the light of any change in circumstances.

2.3 Purpose of Partnership

The principal purpose of the Partnership is to enable the relevant local authorities, 'acting jointly', to fulfil their commitments in the management of the North Devon Biosphere Reserve. In addition, the Partnership will encompass a wider membership in order to engage an appropriate range of relevant national, regional and local interests in the management of the area and facilitate co-operation and co-ordination between these stakeholders.

This will be achieved through the preparation, delivery and regular review of the Strategy for the Biosphere. Success will be measured by the extent to which the policies have been achieved and their associated targets met.

2.4 Summary Vision

By 2030 the UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve designation will be well-known to the local community and visitors, who value this global accolade. The area's brand is so strong that it drives a shift in behaviour that supports all aspects of the Biosphere's Strategy. In short, the Biosphere will be a model for sustainable living in the 21st Century.

2.5 Aims and Objectives

Environmental: To improve the environment of north Devon to reflect its world class status.

Social: To support a more equitable, vibrant and thriving community within the Biosphere Reserve.

Economic: To have a resilient economy in the Biosphere Reserve that contributes to its environmental and social well-being.

Knowledge: To create and share knowledge within the Biosphere Reserve that improves well-being and benefits others.

2.6 Legislative or other mandate

Biospheres are designated for inclusion in the 1995 Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves by the International Co-ordinating Council of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme, an intergovernmental Scientific Programme that aims to establish a scientific basis for the improvement of relationships between people and their environments.

Biospheres are nominated by national governments and remain under the sovereign jurisdiction of the state in which they are located.

As required by the UNESCO Seville 95 Strategy and the Statutory Framework for Biosphere Reserves, the Partnership will develop a vision and strategy for North Devon's Biosphere Reserve and will prepare and implement policies to support its functions of conservation, sustainable development, research, monitoring and education which formulates the policy of the constituent local authorities and agencies for the management of the region and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it.

3. Governance Structure

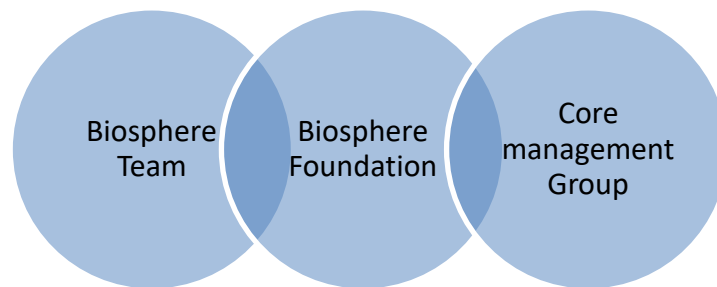
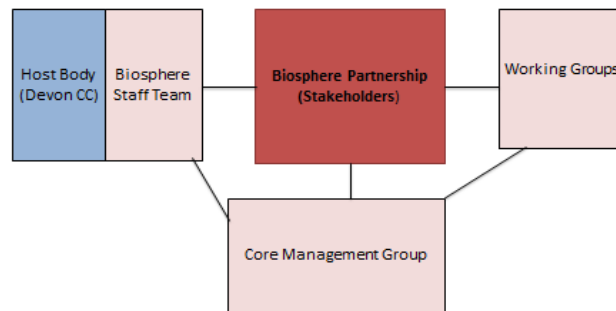
3.1 Structure

The Partnership is led by a non-executive Partnership body and supported by other groups established to ensure effective delivery of purpose. To support this governance structure, a small professional team is hosted by Devon County Council and jointly funded with North Devon Council and Torridge District Council. The North Devon Biosphere Foundation is a charity that has been created to support the North Devon Biosphere as a financial vehicle and active deliverer that work hand in glove with the core staff team and other Partnership members to further the aims in the interests of the UNESCO designation. Its charitable objects are as follows:

- Promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public by the preservation, conservation and protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources;
- Promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic growth & regeneration;
- To advance the education of the public in subjects related to sustainable development, protection, enhancement & rehabilitation of the environment.

All of the working groups are accountable to the Partnership via the Core Management Group and are described in Section 4 and shown in Fig 1 below.

Biosphere Governance Structure



The Biosphere Team are partly working with and through the Foundation which itself is strongly interacting with the core management group on resourcing the work of the Biosphere Reserve.

3.2 Governing and Accountable Bodies

The partnership governing body is the Biosphere Partnership.

The accountable or responsible body for financial management of the Partnership is currently Devon County Council for the period of this Agreement unless the Partnership becomes a legal entity in its own right.

3.3 Membership

For the purposes of this Agreement, the membership refers to that of the Partnership body. Current membership bodies as at October 2015 members fall into the following three categories;

- i) Organisations that have a role in the management of the Biosphere, all of which are invited to send a representative. In the case of local authorities, representatives include officers *and* elected members, the voting right being with the elected member, or delegated to the officer if absent
- ii) Co-opted specialists, appointed by the Partnership
- iii) Chairs of any working groups or other sub-groups established by the Partnership

Should there be a need for a vote, (see 3.6), all members (as set out in the categories above) have full voting rights. A full list of the current membership is in Annex 1.

The Partnership can, by agreement, invite additional organisations to send representatives, or co-opt additional specialists at any time, and for any time period. Those new members must be able to satisfy the Partnership that they can further the aims of the Biosphere.

Partnership members should be required to attend a minimum number of meetings within a set period. If they fail to attend for three consecutive meetings, the organisation that they represent should be asked to nominate an alternative person to sit on the Partnership.

All members of the Partnership should be asked to sign a 'Membership Accord' which sets out the role of individual members and the way in which they will be expected to contribute to the work of the Partnership. A copy of the 'Membership Accord' is attached at Annex 7.

All new Partnership members should be offered, and would be expected to attend, an initial induction meeting with the Chair and Co-ordinator covering the management and governance of the Biosphere Reserve. All Partnership members should be offered the opportunity to attend other training events that are being held in the area on issues that are relevant to the future management of the Biosphere Reserve.

Partnership members representing an organisation or interest group(s) will be expected to liaise and consult with the other officers or members of that organisation or interest group(s) so as to ensure that they have provided the opportunity for all interests within those bodies to feed in to the work of the Partnership.

3.4 Substitutions

Any representative of an organisation may send an appropriate substitute to Partnership meetings.

3.5 Chairing arrangements

The Partnership will be chaired by a person who is able to be independent of the organisations represented on the Group. A role description and terms for the Chair, together with recruitment arrangements, is set out in Annex 2. A Chair will be confirmed by the Partnership by a vote.

The term of office for the Chair shall be two years and any individual should normally serve for no more than the maximum of two terms.

The Partnership may appoint up to three vice-chairs. Should the Chair not be available or step down from their position without a replacement ready, one of the Vice Chairs, through agreement amongst themselves, will become the interim Chair.

3.6 Decision-making processes

Decisions of the Partnership should be reached by consensus. Should consensus not be possible then a vote may be taken. This will be resolved by a majority of those voting members, as set out above and in Annex 1, present.

Should a vote be needed, the meeting will only be quorate if at least 40% of the voting membership is present. Should there be a tie, the Chair will have a second, and casting, vote.

3.7 Risk management

A simple Risk Assessment detailing the likelihood and impacts of potential risks to the management of the Biosphere and delivery of the Strategy, and the proposed mitigation measures to reduce these risks, will be kept by the Biosphere Team and will be reviewed periodically by the Core Management Group (see Annex 3, Clause 3).

3.8 Urgency procedures

The Chair has the authority to agree to take urgent items, not on the agenda, at Partnership meetings, at his or her discretion, and assuming that (a) the item has arisen between the compilation of the agenda

and the date of the meeting and (b) there is a good reason why the decision cannot wait until the next meeting.

3.9 Termination of membership

Any member organisation or co-opted member has the right to request that their membership is terminated by writing to the chair of the Partnership. Changes to the membership can be considered and agreed by the Partnership in accordance with 3.3 above.

3.10 Role, duties and principal functions

The role of the Partnership as the governing body for the management of the Biosphere is to:

- Seek to champion the interests of the North Devon's Biosphere Reserve and its communities (where this relates to the purpose of Biosphere Reserve designation), and to promote the identity and profile of the area.
- Oversee the preparation and regular review of the management Strategy for the Biosphere.
- Facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the Biosphere Strategy and will monitor progress in achieving its objectives, policies and work programmes.
- Provide policy guidance to a core team of staff who provide administrative and professional support to the Partnership's work.
- Co-operate with the owners and managers of the core area of the Biosphere to ensure that management policies and activities are, so far as possible, complimentary and mutually supportive whilst respecting their rights as owners.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with relevant bodies at national, regional and local levels where these can contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Biosphere,
- Promote a wider understanding of the purposes of Biosphere.
- Ensure that the Biosphere is managed in accordance with national and international policy and guidelines.
- Seek to influence and support the activities of communities and agencies beyond the borders of the Biosphere so that these contribute to the achievement of Biosphere objectives.
- Through the Core Management Group, advise local authorities and other relevant agencies on the financial and staffing resources required for effective Biosphere management and seek additional funds, including external finance, to assist in delivering projects and initiatives identified within the Biosphere Strategy.
- Advise on an annual work programme for the Biosphere Team.
- Establish (and agree Terms of Reference for) other management and governance structures that it considers are necessary for the effective performance of its functions.
- Prepare and publish an annual report of its activities to be distributed to all interested parties.
- Organise a Biosphere Forum (on an annual basis or on some other frequency agreed by the Partnership) to provide an opportunity both for Biosphere residents and other interested parties to input to the management of the Biosphere and for the Partnership to provide feedback on its progress and achievements in managing the Biosphere.

3.11 Financial Management

As a non-statutory, non-executive body which has no independent legal status, budget and resource management will be carried out by individual partners on behalf of the Group. As host authority, Devon County Council will act as accountable body for funding applications made on behalf of the Partnership. The North Devon Biosphere Foundation may also provide another vehicle for funding applications for and on the behalf of the Partnership and its members, providing it is consistent with the BR strategy and the charitable objects of the foundation.

The Partnership makes a collective commitment to ensuring that adequate financial and human resources are secured to effectively meet its obligations, particularly in respect of delivery of the Strategy. The funding requirements of the Partnership will form part of an annual Business Plan for the Biosphere Team. The Business Plan will distinguish between:

- i) 'core costs' : i.e. costs associated with the establishment and running of the Biosphere Team and other aspects of the administration of the Biosphere;

- ii) 'project costs': i.e. costs associated with the implementation of projects and initiatives which contribute to the delivery of the Biosphere Strategy.

3.12 Accountability

The Partnership is the responsible body tasked with delivering the responsibilities of the designation on behalf of, and accountable to, the UK Government, who is accountable to UNESCO in relation to the designation. These responsibilities are set out in detail in Para 3.10 above, and include the day to day management of the Biosphere, care for its assets and monitoring that the principles of the Seville Strategy and Madrid Action Plan are being upheld.

The Partnership is the custodian of the Biosphere brand. Organisation using the name of the Biosphere in its operation must have the approval of the partnership.

The Partnership is also accountable to the northern Devon communities which some of its member organisations represent and to the funding partners who are the elected representatives of the local communities.

3.13 Transparency

For the purpose of transparency, a written declaration of interests should be provided by members of the Partnership at appropriate intervals. Declaration of an interest will not debar a member of the Partnership from speaking or voting on any issues raised at Partnership meetings

The list of interests declared will be held with the Biosphere Team.

3.14 Meeting arrangements

i) Frequency and location

The Partnership will meet at least three times a year, normally in February, June and October. Additional meetings may be called by agreement. Meeting venues will rotate between appropriate locations throughout the Biosphere area.

Dates for these meetings should be identified several months ahead and be fixed with reference to the diaries of the local authorities in order to avoid clashes with other meetings.

Additional Partnership meetings may be held, at the discretion of the Chair, as and when required

ii) Other invitees

Other standing invitees to the meeting will be members of the Biosphere Team and officer support to elected members representing local authority partners, to whom those elected members may delegate their voting rights if they are unable to attend.

iii) Agendas and minutes

Agendas will be decided in advance of Partnership meetings at meetings of the Core Management Group. All Partnership members will be invited to suggest agenda items prior to this date. The Team will aim to send out agendas and papers one week in advance of the meetings, and minutes within one month after the meetings.

Where possible, Partnership papers should be circulated electronically to enable members to forward/circulate the papers within the organisations or interests who they represent to give an opportunity to feedback to the representative prior to the meeting.

Any Partnership member can submit items to the Biosphere Co-ordinator or Partnership Chair for consideration by the Partnership. The Chair, in consultation with the Co-ordinator, will decide whether such items are appropriate for inclusion on the agendas for a Partnership meeting or may be considered in other ways.

iv) Officer support

Meetings will be organised and supported by the Biosphere Team.

4. Description and Roles of Other Groups

4.1 Core Management Group

The Partnership delegates responsibility to the Core Management Group for the detail of implementation of the Strategy, including finding resources, monitoring progress against the Team's annual business plan, overseeing the Team, forward planning for the Partnership and for advising on any required changes to future governance arrangements. This Group meets at least one month in advance of each Partnership meeting to support the Team in planning the agenda and papers for the Partnership and to deal with other business.

The Group's Terms of Reference including membership is set out in Annex 3.

4.2 Working Groups

The Partnership is supported in delivery of the Strategy and advised by a number of Working Groups. Such groups enable a much wider group of people, including experts and front-line delivery staff, to be involved in Biosphere projects and can be very effective at helping the many partners to make their contribution towards a mutually beneficial common aim. The Groups should reflect the themes of the current Strategy and may be amended over time.

More details on these Groups and the collective Terms of Reference are set out in Annex 4. The Chair of each Group (if not already) should be co-opted members of the Partnership.

4.3 Biosphere Team

The Biosphere Team's role is to work for the Partnership in the delivery of the Strategy as advisor, supporter, coordinator, facilitator and deliverer. Activities are delivered under the identity of the Partnership rather than that of the employing authority or individual funding partner.

As the key body for the delivery of the Strategy for the Biosphere, the Partnership's priority with respect to securing resources is to ensure that there are sufficient in place to enable the Team to achieve its core functions. Allocation of staff time and financial resources is planned by the Team, agreed annually and monitored by the Core Management Group.

The role and structure of the Team is set out in Annex 5.

4.4 Host Authority

The Team is employed by Devon County Council who thus acts as the host authority and accountable body for the Partnership. Its role as host authority is set out in Annex 6.

4.5 Biosphere Foundation

The Biosphere Foundation is a not for profit, limited by guarantee, charitable organisation registered with ENTRUST as an environmental body. It currently has four Directors and is dedicated to furthering the aims of the Biosphere Partnership i.e. sustainable development. It has been successful in applying for funding for some projects which help to deliver the Strategy. In 2014, the Foundation gained charitable status with its objects being defined as sustainable development (i.e. it will legitimately cover environment and social aspects and economic development that is sustainable.) This will allow it to develop the charitable role within and for the Biosphere Partnership and its members.

5. Communications and Consultation

5.1 Communications and information sharing

Details of the Partnership, along with minutes and papers for meetings will be available on the official website www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk News items will be promoted through the website, and feedback to Partnership will generally be directed through the Chair or indirectly via the Team, supplemented by content added to the website.

Use of facebook and twitter linked with the website will be in accordance with the policy of the host authority. Partnership members will endeavour to communicate messages and campaigns about the Biosphere in a concerted manner.

5.2 Feedback

In order to make clear provision for members of the public to lodge comments, complaints and compliments, the Partnership adheres to the appropriate policy of the host authority, details of which are available on www.devon.gov.uk

5.3 Partnership statements

With regard to press and publicity, only the Chair of the Partnership and, under the Chair's delegation, the Biosphere Co-ordinator or any other person with the Chair's specific authorisation, can speak on behalf of the Partnership.

5.4 Responding to consultations

The Partnership delegates responsibility for the preparation of responses to consultations, including any major planning applications, which affect the Biosphere to the Team. In the case of significant or sensitive issues, where time allows such responses should be taken to the Partnership for endorsement prior to submission. If necessary where time does not allow, this may be done electronically. Where it has not been possible to secure the endorsement of the Partnership in order to meet a consultation deadline, responses submitted by the Team should make this clear.

5.5 Involvement of the public in the workings of the Partnership

The Partnership will seek to engage the public in its workings in a number of ways, including the following:

- i) Representatives of communities are invited to engage with the Community Group;
- ii) All of the relevant reports, papers, minutes and news items will be made available on www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk and through an electronic newsletter to those interested;
- iii) Key stakeholders are invited to appropriate Forum or Workshops to engage them in participatory planning and involve them in the workings of the Partnership and encourage feedback and sharing of information;
- iv) The Partnership is committed to consulting the public on policy development, with a minimum ten week consultation period for the Strategy reviews;
- v) The Team's presence at a range of public events throughout the year, including the North Devon Show, will provide further opportunities for public engagement

6. Monitoring and Review

6.1 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

The Partnership will monitor progress against the Management plan Aims in a number of different ways, set out in the table below:

Table 1 Simplified Monitoring and Evaluation framework

Monitoring requirement	Method / frequency	Audience	Responsibility
State of the Environment report and Periodic Review	Report every ten years	UNESCO	Partnership (Team to implement)
Performance against the aims of the Strategy, as indicated in the targets	Annual Report	Wider partnership, funders, general public. UK MAB Committee and UNESCO MaB	Partnership (Team to implement)

Condition of the Biosphere using the Eco-systems Services approach	Updates to the State of the Environment Report	Partnership UNESCO as required	Team
Performance against the Policies of the Strategy	Working Group progress reports	Partnership	Team
Delivery of annual Business Plan	Report to Core Management Group	Core Management Group	Team
Delivery against the Sustainable Development Goals and the Lima Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves	Report every year	UNESCO and UK Government	Team

6.2. Review of the Partnership

This Partnership Agreement will operate to 31 March 2024, at which time it will be subject to a fundamental review by the Partnership to relate to any new Strategy that will be in place from 2024.

There will be a light touch interim review in March 2019 to ensure that the governance arrangements are still fit for purpose in delivery of the current Biosphere Strategy 2014-2024.

Subject to the agreement of the Core Management Group and a consensus of the full Partnership, the Agreement may be subject to minor amendment prior to the above dates.

6.3 Arrangements for dissolution

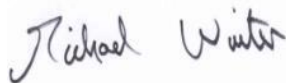
Should the Partnership agree to its dissolution, or should external events lead to this happening, it will be the responsibility of the accountable bodies (see 3.2 above) or any successor bodies (if appropriate) to undertake the purpose of the Partnership.

7. Contact details

Biosphere Team
Room 508
Civic Centre
Barnstaple
EX31 1ED
biosphere-mailbox@devon.gov.uk
www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk
01271 388647

This Agreement does not establish or evidence a partnership in law between the parties and, by way of example only; neither party is liable for the debts or any other obligations of any other party.

Signed by the Chair on behalf of the Partnership (as listed in Annex 1)



.....
Professor Michael Winter

.....
Date

ANNEX 1

MEMBERSHIP OF THE BIOSPHERE PARTNERSHIP

Full, voting members of North Devon's Biosphere Partnership will include representatives of:

Local Authorities:

Devon County Council	North Devon Council
Torrige District Council	West Devon Borough Council

Statutory Bodies

Devon and Severn IFCA	Environment Agency
Forestry Commission	Natural England

Charities and Voluntary Sector:

Beaford Arts	Coastwise North Devon
Devon Association of Parish Councils	Devon Wildlife Trust
National Trust	North Devon Biosphere Foundation
Tarka Country Trust	Taw-Torrige Estuary Forum

Landowners, Managers and Marine

Christie Devon Estates	National Farmers Union
North Devon Fisherman's Association	

Local Partnerships

North Devon AONB Partnership	North Devon Nature Improvement Area
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Business Support

Barnstaple Chamber of Commerce	North Devon Manufacturers Association
North Devon Plus	

Academic

Bideford College	Bournemouth University
Exeter University	Petroc College

The Partnership may also have corresponding members who can attend at any time and contribute to Partnership meetings but cannot vote. These include:

Dartmoor National Park	Exmoor National Park
Defence Estates	FWAG South West
MP North Devon	MP Torrige and West Devon
Mole Valley Farmers	North Devon Theatres
RHS Rosemoor	University of the Third Age, Barnstaple
	Westcountry Rivers Trust
University of Plymouth	
University of Kent	
UK MaB Committee	

ANNEX 2 :

ROLE AND RECRUITMENT OF CHAIR / VICE CHAIRS

1. Introduction

The chairperson will play a crucial role in helping the Partnership to deliver its obligations to UNESCO, and the Man and the Biosphere Programme. The role will require a candidate who is committed to the values of sustainable development as exemplified through the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and who themselves has an area of expertise that has a bearing on the delivery of the Strategy. The success of the Partnership will be measured by its ability to deliver the objectives of the Strategy, and the chairperson will play a key leadership and champion role in support of this. The Chairperson will need to be independent of the existing Partnership membership, and will be required to make clear any conflicts of interests at the outset.

2. Expectations of the role

- Chairing the Partnership meetings (three half days / year)
- Chairing the Core Management Group meetings (three half day meetings / year)
- Attend a briefing sessions with Co-ordinator (four half days / year + phone calls)

In addition, there will be some expectation that the Chair will:

- Liaise with the Vice-Chairs and Chairs of working groups and other members of the partnership as necessary.
- Speak to the media when required, with the support of the Co-ordinator or other team members.
- Attend public events to champion the work of the Partnership.
- Undertake other work as necessary, and as they are able to within their other commitments

Although there is no stipend for this post, all travel, subsistence, telephone calls, and other related expenses could be reimbursed. It is anticipated that the initial length of the appointment will be for two years, and there will be a maximum of two terms for any single candidate.

3. Job Description

Aims of Post Chair of the Biosphere Partnership

Objectives To oversee the Partnership's role in the delivery of the Strategy for the Biosphere and any associated implementation plans

The role will involve the following responsibilities:

- Chair Partnership and Core Management Group meetings in a way that is inclusive and promotes participation of all partners.
- Maintain an overview of the progress against the Strategy objectives.
- Champion the work of the Partnership by attending public events, and representing the Partnership at sub regional, regional, national and international level, as necessary.
- Talking to the media when appropriate on behalf of the Partnership
- Ensuring that the Partnership operates according to its agreed working practices and it is inclusive, transparent and open
- Liaise with the Biosphere Coordinator on a regular basis to ensure good communications are maintained
- Liaise with the Vice-Chairs, Partnership Working Groups and their Chairs to maintain and improve cross-sectoral working
- Chair and attend other meetings as necessary and as identified in the expectations above

4. Person Specification

Experience

- Partnership working at a senior strategic level
- Significant experience at chairing multi-partner meetings or committees
- Significant experience within a sector that has relevance to one or more objectives of the Strategy

Knowledge

- Knowledge of the Biosphere and reasons for designation
- An understanding of UNESCO and the Man and Biosphere programme
- An understanding of environmental and sustainability issues

Skills

- Excellent communication skills, including public speaking and media engagement
- Highly developed leadership skills
- Ability to facilitate, negotiate and influence others to achieve positive outcomes

Other

- An ability to be impartial and be detached from past or ongoing interests
- A positive approach to risk-taking and innovation, encouraging others and working effectively with them
- Enthusiastic about the aspirations of the Partnership
- An understanding of and commitment to working in a way that promotes equality of opportunity and diversity
- Live or work within the Biosphere
- High level contacts within the Biosphere and across the South West

5. Recruitment Process

The following mechanism is proposed for the recruitment:

Applicants for the position will be sought through nominations by the Partnership members and through contact with key individuals throughout the area to seek names of potential candidates.

The Chairs and Vice-Chairs will consider the names and draw up a short-list of no more than three who will be asked if they are willing to stand.

If there is more than one potential candidate, they will be asked to submit a CV and may be invited to attend a Partnership meeting to make a short verbal presentation before a formal election takes place, if required.

The name of the chosen candidate should be formally endorsed by the Partnership.

6. Vice-Chairs

There is provision for up to three Vice-Chairs to be appointed from the Partnership membership or recruited specifically to support the Chair in his/her work. They should exhibit similar qualities to the Chair and will be expected to deputise, and / or undertake some of the Chairs duties, on request.

The Foundation has a strong supporting role for the partnership, therefore the Chairman of the North Devon Foundation will have an ex-officio position as Vice Chairman for the partnership.

With the agreement of the Chair, names may be put forward by any Partnership member, for endorsement by the Partnership as a whole, provided the candidate can demonstrate the majority of the criteria under the Person Specification above.

ANNEX 3

NORTH DEVON BIOSPHERE CORE MANAGEMENT GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Purpose

The overall purpose of the Core Management Group is to oversee strategic planning and delivery in the medium term and to examine future structures by which the designation may be managed locally in the future.

The Core Management Group will be specifically delegated to lead on the following issues:

- Make and implement decisions related to day to day delivery of the strategy
- Make recommendations to the Partnership on any future changes to governance and operations
- Make recommendations to the host authority on matters related to staffing and budgets

2. Membership

The composition of the Core Management Group should reflect the expertise required to deliver the four themes of the Biosphere Strategy of Environment, Social, Economy and Knowledge, and the interests of the Biosphere funding bodies. It will comprise:

a) Voting Members

- Partnership Chair and two Vice-Chairs
- Foundation Chair or Vice-Chair
- Representative of the Defra Agencies (Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission)
- Representative of key charitable delivery bodies (Devon Wildlife Trust, Westcountry Rivers Trust, Tarka Country Trust)
- Representative of the AONB Partnership or Team
- Representatives (member and advisory officer) of the three local authority funding bodies, Devon County Council, North Devon Council and Torrington District Council. There will be one vote per authority; the officer may have the vote when the member is absent.
- Community / Expert representative(s) nominated by and from the Partnership, if required to ensure all four themes of the Strategy are represented. It would normally be expected that the Partnership Chair and Vice-Chairs would fulfil these roles.

b) Non-Voting Members

- The Core Management Group will be advised through the attendance of the Biosphere Co-ordinator, or other members of the Team where appropriate.
- Other individuals or representatives of organisations may be invited to meetings on an ad hoc basis, as felt relevant, to provide specialist input or advice.

3. Specific Functions

The key responsibilities of the Core Management Group are to direct the Biosphere Team to ensure that:

- i) The Biosphere Strategy is reviewed and recommended for adoption by the Partnership.
- ii) The annual business/delivery plan for the Biosphere is prepared and implemented through maximising the input of the wider Biosphere Partnership.

- iii) The progress of the work of the Biosphere is monitored in all of its functions against the agreed business plan and strategy.
- iv) Recommendations are made to the host employing authority of the Team on staff and budgetary matters.
- v) The conditions and required outputs of the funding partners and any reporting procedures are fully met.
- vi) The work programme and priorities for the Team are agreed.
- vii) A Risk Assessment related to the management of the Biosphere is in place and kept under regular review.
- viii) External funding opportunities are pursued for projects that meet the priorities of the Strategy and will support the employment of the Team.
- ix) A clear Communication Strategy for the Partnership is prepared to create a higher and sharper profile for the Biosphere.
- x) Use of the brand and other assets of the Biosphere are protected.
- xi) Technical advice and support to the wider Partnership is provided and that opportunities for collaborative working between all stakeholders are identified.
- xii) The Annual Report of the Biosphere activity is published.
- xiii) The agenda and supporting papers for the Partnership are agreed.
- xiv) The governance of the Biosphere Partnership is kept under review and recommendations for any new arrangements are made to Partnership. (During 2016 this should include examining the range of potential structures for the Biosphere as a separate entity through agreement of a brief for the work.)

4. Meetings

The Core Management Group should meet at least one month before each Partnership meeting which are normally scheduled three times a year in February, June and October. If feasible, the option of participating through conference calls should be offered.

5. Operations and Decision Making

- i) The Chair of the Group will be the Chair of the Biosphere Partnership or, in his/her absence, one of the Vice-Chairs of the Partnership.
- ii) Certain members of the Core Management Group have been nominated by Partnership to represent their sector (eg governmental, environmental, charitable) but the views they express will be those of their own organisation and they will not be expected to act as a delegate to other bodies within the sector that they represent.
- iii) Secretariat duties will be undertaken by the Biosphere Team who will arrange and book meeting venues, co-ordinate the agenda, arrange for supporting papers, and take minutes.
- iv) Agendas and papers will ideally be circulated one week prior to meetings.

- v) Action minutes will be made of each meeting and a draft distributed to all Core Management Group members within two weeks of meetings for any amendment and in order for actions to be promptly progressed.
- vi) Decisions of the Core Management Group should be reached by consensus wherever possible. Should this not be possible, then a vote may be taken. Should a vote be needed, the meeting will only be quorate if at least 60% of the voting membership (or the organisations delegated officer) is present. In the event of a tie, the Chair will have the casting vote.
- vii) In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act requirements of the partner local authorities, the minutes will be generally available on request (except those elements which relate to commercial interests or are subject to the Data Protection Act or where there are clear reasons where it is not in the public interest to disclose information and this is documented in the minutes of the meeting.).
- viii) A member of the Group should declare any potential conflict of interest and, if necessary, absent themselves from discussion and decisions.

6. Reporting and Communications

- i) The Core Management Group minutes (edited of any sensitive and confidential staffing or financial information) will be circulated to all Partnership members and a summary report on progress will be given at each meeting of the Biosphere Partnership.
- ii) It is the responsibility of each individual member of the Core Management Group to report progress of the Group to his/her constituent organisation and to seek endorsement of any relevant decision or action.
- iii) The Core Management Group will engage and consult with other partners, stakeholders and organisations as appropriate in developing its proposals.
- iv) The Core Management Group will co-ordinate any publicity and media engagement relating to revised operations for the Biosphere. Media releases should be agreed with the Chairman in advance of publishing.

ANNEX 4

BIOSPHERE WORKING GROUPS – GENERIC TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Role of Working Groups

The principal functions of the Working Groups are to:

- Provide a mechanism through which the Partnership and Biosphere Team can actively engage with a wide range of organisations, individuals and interest groups concerned with, or interested in the management of the Biosphere;
- Facilitate the development of an inclusive and participative approach to the management of the North Devon's Biosphere;
- Assist the Partnership, Core Management Group and Biosphere Team in the preparation/review and delivery of the Biosphere Strategy and Delivery Plan;
- Enable the Partnership and Biosphere Team to access specialist knowledge and expertise that will assist in the production/review and implementation of the Biosphere Strategy and Delivery Plan.

2. Working Group Framework

The background and remit of each Group is summarised below. The primary role of the Working Groups is to deliver the key policies from the Biosphere Strategy; each Group will have specific responsibilities for a number of policies, in addition to supporting other policies, as outlined below and illustrated in the table that follows:

i) Catchment Partnership Group (currently made up of Environment Agency, DWT, WRT, AONB, Natural England and Biosphere team). It also has a public reference group that includes several stakeholders not part of the Partnership. The Group should develop a stronger relationship with the Catchment Sensitive Farming Strategic Partnership, the Freshwater Pearl Project, the Estuary Project and the Up-stream thinking projects.

ii) The Community Group. This Group is now based on an extended NIA Community Group and replaces the previous community and outreach group. Community inclusion is cross cutting across most of the project areas; however, there are some strategic policies within the Strategy that the Group should be leading.

iii) Marine Working Group. This Group has successfully worked on a number of issues and has been involved with MCZs, ValMER and the recent FLAG projects. The Group should lead on the delivery of the marine related policies in the Strategy and should also represent the Biosphere in Marine Spatial Planning, fisheries improvement projects and other marine issues.

iv) Woodland Group. This Group, chaired by the Forestry Commission, has also been extended from the former NIA Woodland Group to cover the entire Biosphere Reserve, with expanded membership. This Group is responsible for taking forward the strategic policy related to Woodland Enterprise Zones and associated projects.

v) Energy Group. This grouping previously existed as an informal meeting to support energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. It is responsible for the Energy Strategy for the Biosphere and delivering the strategic policies related to energy. It includes a number of individuals, interested in energy issues from within the community.

vi) Green Economy Group. This Group was established in 2015 to ensure the Economy was represented in the Framework, by including representatives from business, tourism and agriculture / farming interests. It is responsible for taking forward policies within the Strategy related to the economy, farming and green business.

vii) Research and Evidence Group; The social capital generated within the Biosphere has led to some major research going on in the area from Sustainable Intensification to Boulder movements in the bay, and social research in ecosystem services. The maturation of the Biosphere now means that it is well regarded as a site for science and thus it is receiving more attention. The Group is responsible for policies directly related to research programmes and enhancing the knowledge base, including consideration of a more formal research agenda and use of the Biosphere status to attract the funds. This group currently largely communicates via email

viii) The NIA Group is a separate steering group for development and delivery of the integrated landscape scale Northern Devon NIA programme, which originated from Defra’s Natural Environment White Paper in 2011. The NIA covers the river Torridge catchment, although ‘fuzzy’ boundaries mean that sometimes NIA projects contribute to delivery elsewhere in the Biosphere Reserve. The NIA group will continue to report directly to the Partnership, and works to its own Business Plan which currently covers the period 2015-20. As the NIA covers multiple objectives across a range of Biosphere strategic priorities, there should be cross-fertilisation with the other working groups, especially the Catchment Partnership Group, Community Group, Woodland Group and Research & Evidence Group.

	Catchment Partnership Group	Community Group	Marine Working Group	Woodland Group	Energy Group	Green Economy Group	Research and Evidence Group	NIA Group (see viii above)
ENV1								
ENV2								
ENV3								
ENV4								
ENV5								
ENV6								
SOC1								
SOC2								
SOC3								
SOC4								
SOC5								
ECON1								
ECON2								
ECON3								
ECON4								
ECON5								
ECON6								
ECON7								
ECON8								
ECON9								
KNO1								
KNO2								
KNO3								
KNO4								
KNO5								

* While each Group will have specific responsibilities for a number of policies, they will also provide support for a number of other relevant policies.

Linking well-being with natural systems is a cross cutting theme in all the work the Partnership does, and each of the Working Groups should consider biodiversity within their work programmes.

This Section outlines the framework of Groups in 2015; as work develops on delivering the Strategy, it may be that other Groups will need to be formed.

3. Membership

Each Working Group will determine its membership based on expertise of Partnership members relevant to the topic. The Working Groups can co-opt other specialists or interested individuals within the wider Biosphere community as members of the Group on a long term or short term basis who have experience or resources to contribute to the objectives of the working group

4. Specific Functions

In aggregate, the Working Groups will cover all four themes of the Strategy and each one should define its own role in delivering the specific policies for which it is responsible and for identifying external funding opportunities that will provide the resources for implementation. Each group should also set out any other specific function it may have relevant to that Group.

5. Operations

- Each Working Group will elect a Chair from amongst its membership on a biennial basis. In the event of the chair not being present at a meeting, a Chair for the meeting shall be elected by the members present.
- Each of the Groups' Chairs should be represented at the Biosphere Partnership as a co-opted member, if not already a member in their own right.
- With the exception of the NIA group, the Biosphere Team will provide the secretariat for each Group and assist in convening meetings, administration and minute taking. However, the Chair of each group should not be a Biosphere Team member of staff.
- In consultation with the Partnership and Chairman, the Working Groups may individually or collectively form specialist Task and Finish Groups to develop or implement specific projects and initiatives which should focus primarily on delivering actions identified within the Biosphere Strategy and Delivery Plan.
- It is envisaged that any Task and Finish Groups would have a small multi-disciplinary membership and be of a temporary nature.
- The Working Groups are embryonic groups established in 2015 to meet the requirements of the Strategy 2014-24. The need for, and composition of each Group should be reviewed on a regular basis with the consensus of the Biosphere Partnership.
- The first task of each group should be to establish its work load, priority tasks and determine a time limited programme.
- The Groups will meet as often as they need to progress delivery.
- The Chair should provide a short report (one page maximum) to each meeting of the Core Management Group which will also be included in the papers for information at the following Partnership where the Chair may take questions on the report.
- Any resource requirements will need to be agreed with the Core Management Group in advance of any expenditure.

ANNEX 5

BIOSPHERE STAFF TEAM – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Partnership, through the host authority, is supported by a Biosphere Team, employed to provide administrative and professional support to its work.

The key function of the Biosphere Team will be to assist the Biosphere Partnership in fulfilling its responsibilities, as set out in its Constitution. In this context, the principal task of the Team will be to assist the Partnership in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Biosphere Strategy and Action Plan.

Structure of Staff Team

The core staff team currently comprises the following posts:

Biosphere Co-ordinator and Manager

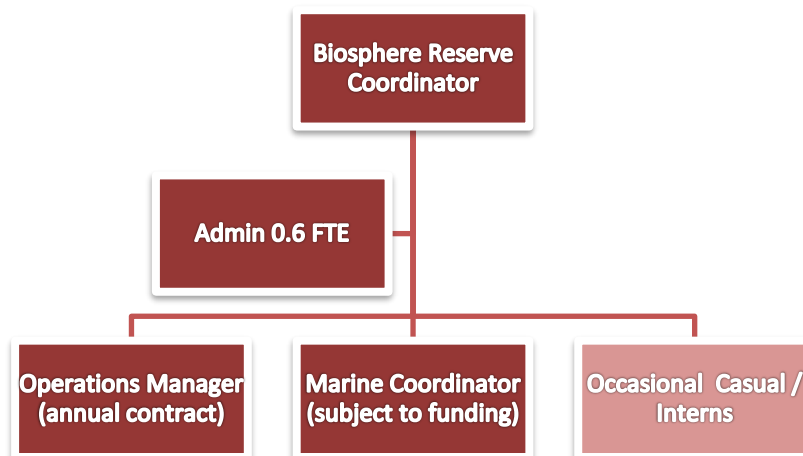
Landscape and Biodiversity Manager

Outreach Co-ordinator

Administrator (0.6fte)

+

Occasional voluntary, casual and intern support



The Biosphere Team may be strengthened, as necessary and appropriate, through the appointment of temporary externally funded project staff either employed, or seconded to, the host authority, or employed by one of the Partnership bodies, as a result of successful external funding applications to support the delivery of the Strategy.

Core Functions of the Biosphere Team

The key functions of the Biosphere Team will be in accordance with those set out below:

- Developing a vision and strategy for management of the Biosphere.
- Preparing the Biosphere Strategy, on behalf of the Biosphere Partnership, as required by UNESCO statutory framework for Biosphere Reserves;
- Promoting understanding of the vision and strategy of the Biosphere to local communities.
- Implementing directly and co-ordinating implementation by others, of the Strategy delivery plan.
- Co-ordinating and advising local authority services on issues pertinent to the Biosphere.
- Monitoring and reporting on progress against business plan targets;
- Seeking additional funds to assist with undertaking management activities, including external funding,
- Developing project proposals with other Partnership bodies to support delivery of the Strategy.

- Seeking advice from, and liaison with, Biosphere Reserves at a national level and through UK MAB;
- Providing an internal management role to co-ordinate protection of the Biosphere;
- Promoting the value of the Biosphere to the community;
- Developing involvement by the community in the management of the Biosphere ;
- Providing planning advice and related activities to local authorities;

ANNEX 6

ROLE OF HOST AUTHORITY

The Host Authority, currently Devon County Council, is the local authority responsible for the Partnership's finances and also employs the Biosphere team.

In detail, the host authority is responsible for:

- Acting as employer of the staff employed as part of the Biosphere Team, including payment of staff salaries, employers' national insurance, superannuation contributions, maternity / paternity pay, payments in respect of absence through sickness, travel and subsistence expenses, and agreed training expenses in accordance with the Host Authority conditions of service.
- Responsibility for any redundancy and associated payment, contractually or legally due to a post holder employed by the Host Authority exclusively for the purposes of the Partnership.
- Line management of the Biosphere Co-ordinator, including undertaking annual appraisals and reviews and supporting development and training requirements.
- Providing accommodation (office rents and rates), IT and office equipment, insurance, and health and safety equipment.
- Providing human resources and other necessary office support services to include but not limited to financial and legal support, IT support and property services.
- Advertising for vacant posts and travel and subsistence costs incurred by interview candidates and other recruitment costs;
- Exercising responsibility for the financial management of the Partnership and acting in accordance with its own Constitution and Financial Regulations.
- Ensuring contributions from other local authority partners and external funding sources are received and accounted for as part of the Biosphere budgeting process.
- In relation to VAT, the Host Authority will act as both accountable body and single lead body for the Partnership.

Annex 7

Membership Accord: Biosphere Partnership

As a member of the Biosphere Partnership, I undertake:

- to promote the three functions of conservation, sustainable development and education of the North Devon’s Biosphere Reserve;
- to champion the Partnership's vision for the North Devon’s Biosphere Reserve and its communities, as set out in the Biosphere Reserve Strategy;
- to liaise and consult with others within my organisation or interest group, if relevant, to ensure the views of the whole body are represented;
- to contribute knowledge, expertise and experience to the work of the Partnership;
- to promote, support and play a full and active part in the work of the Partnership in fulfilling its ‘Roles and Responsibilities’ as set out in the Partnership’s ‘Terms of Reference’;
- to assist the Partnership in achieving an independent and apolitical profile in the performance of its functions;
- to attend Partnership meetings whenever possible and, if I am no longer able to attend meetings on a regular basis, to step down from the Partnership or, with the agreement of the Partnership chair, to seek another representative from within my organisation to take my seat on the Partnership.

Signed.....

Representing.....

Date.....