

# **SOLENT RECREATION MITIGATION PARTNERSHIP (Bird Aware Solent)**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. Purpose of the Partnership**

- 1.1. The purpose of the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership (also known by its public facing brand name 'Bird Aware Solent') is to facilitate joint working by local authorities and other bodies on the implementation of measures which will mitigate the impact of additional recreational activity which will result from planned housing development so that it does not have a significant effect on the three Special Protection Areas in the Solent. It succeeds the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project which commissioned research into the impact.
- 1.2. The Partnership will undertake joint technical work to identify, implement and monitor the necessary mitigation measures, and facilitate liaison and information sharing between the partners.
- 1.3. The Partnership will maintain liaison with other organisations which are undertaking related activities in order to exchange information and avoid duplication of work.
- 1.4. For the avoidance of doubt, the Partnership cannot exercise any of the functions of a planning authority nor can it fetter any decisions made by such bodies, nor the rights and responsibilities of the landowners within the SPAs. The Partnership will recognise and take account of the interests, rights and responsibilities of landowners, users and other stakeholders.

### **2. Partnership membership, structure and relationships**

- 2.1. The Partnership comprises of the following local authorities and other organisations:-
  - Chichester District Council
  - East Hampshire District Council
  - Eastleigh Borough Council
  - Fareham Borough Council
  - Gosport Borough Council
  - Hampshire County Council
  - Havant Borough Council
  - Isle of Wight Council

- New Forest District Council
- New Forest National Park Authority
- Portsmouth City Council
- Southampton City Council
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Test Valley Borough Council
- Winchester City Council
- Natural England
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
- Chichester Harbour Conservancy.
- Arun District Council (in a non-voting capacity)

2.2. The Partnership will consist of two bodies:

- A Project Board which will determine the Partnership's overall direction;
- A Steering Group which will manage the Partnership's work and activities within the overall direction set by the Project Board.

2.3. The Project Board will comprise of:

- the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) Co-Ordinator;
- the Chair of the Partnership for South Hampshire Planning Officers Group;
- four chief/senior officers from the local authorities listed in 2.1 (with the exception of any attending in a non-voting capacity) of which one will be from an authority which is not a member of PfSH;
- a representative of Natural England;
- a representatives of each of the three wildlife/conservation organisations listed in 2.1;
- an officer representative of any organisation which is employing staff on behalf of the Partnership<sup>1</sup>.

2.4. The Steering Group will comprise of an officer representative from each of the organisations listed in 2.1.

2.5. At the discretion of the meeting chairperson, staff which are employed to undertake the work of the Partnership will also be able to attend meetings of the Project Board and the Steering Group in a non-voting capacity.

### **3. Governance**

3.1. The work of the Partnership will be overseen by PfSH, with the PfSH Joint Committee approving the annual work programme and priorities. PfSH will

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<sup>1</sup>The Partnership is not legally able to employ staff itself, so any staff will be employed on its behalf by one of the partner organisations.

invite one representative of each of the local authorities listed in 2.1 which are not members of PfSH (Chichester District Council, New Forest National Park Authority and South Downs National Park Authority) to meetings of its Planning & Infrastructure Panel and Joint Committee where the work of this Partnership is to be discussed.

#### **4. Project Board functions and procedures**

4.1. The Project Board shall have the following functions:

- 4.1.1. To act on behalf of the member organisations in identifying and implementing the measures which are necessary to mitigate the impact of additional recreational activity on the Solent Special Protection Areas;
- 4.1.2. To commission studies and surveys, and fund works relating to the Partnership's objectives;
- 4.1.3. To fund and manage the employment of staff<sup>1</sup> to undertake the Partnership's activities;
- 4.1.4. To administer funds received from member organisations or other sources to carry out these functions, and maintain accounts relating to the allocation and expenditure of these funds;
- 4.1.5. To instruct the Steering Group to undertake work and to fund such work as appropriate;
- 4.1.6. To approve and publish documents relating to the Partnership's objectives;
- 4.1.7. To publish guidance and provide advice to member and stakeholder organisations, including making non-binding recommendations for a course of action or policy for adoption;
- 4.1.8. To report on the Partnership's activities and seek approval of the future work programme, as necessary and at least annually, to the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH);
- 4.1.9. To keep these terms of reference under review and make appropriate amendments as necessary.

4.2. The Chair will be elected annually from amongst the nominated representatives of the partner organisations.

#### **5. Steering Group functions and procedures**

5.1. The Steering Group will provide technical support to the Project Board, prepare reports for the Board's consideration and carry out such actions as may be instructed by the Board including the following:

- 5.1.1. To prepare, for approval by the Project Board, a long-term strategy which sets out the necessary mitigation measures and how they will be funded;

- 5.1.2. To manage and implement the studies, surveys, and mitigation works commissioned by the Project Board;
- 5.1.3. To prepare monitoring reports which set out the progress made in implementing the mitigation measures and their effectiveness;
- 5.1.4. To prepare regular updates on progress and make recommendations to the Project Board annually on the work programme for the coming year
- 5.1.5. To keep partner organisations briefed on the Partnership's work and activities.

5.2. The Steering Group will meet at least three times each year. A chairperson will be elected annually from amongst the nominated representatives of the partner organisations.

5.3. The Steering Group may establish small project or working groups, resourced as necessary, to progress particular aspects of its work. Representatives of organisations who have a recognised interest in the planning or management of the Solent SPAs but are not Partnership members may be invited to join such groups.

## **6. Financial administration**

6.1. The Partnership Project Board shall appoint one of the local authorities listed in 2.1 to hold and administer the Partnership's funds, and to provide advice and guidance on all financial matters.

6.2. The Project Board will prepare a financial protocol which will set out the procedures for approving expenditure and for accounting for money handled by the Partnership.

## **7. Other key support services**

7.1. The Partnership Project Board shall also appoint local authority partners to undertake other key services for the Partnership. These shall include procurement advice and legal support.