Meeting Notes - Cotswold Catchment Pilot May 17th 2012

Venue: Down Ampney Village Hall <http://www.downampneyvillagehall.co.uk/>

Local Produce lunch: supplied by Butts Farm Shop <http://buttsfarmrarebreeds.co.uk/>

Those present: Rowena Harris Facilitator Dialogue by Design; Chris Short – Pilot Partner CCRI, University of Gloucestershire; Alex Cairns – Placement Student, CCRI, University of Gloucestershire; Will Gotley – Engineer; Chris Coucher – GRCC Rural Adviser; Jenny Phelps Pilot Lead, Glos FWAG Farm Conservation Adviser, FWAG SW Associate; Liz Parker – Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust; Esther Collis – Glos BAP Partnership Co- coordinator; Lisa Warne Natural England Environmental Stewardship; Paul St Pierre Upper Thames Catchment Lead EA; Matthew Millett Director CWPT; Ross Agutter Cotswolds Catchment EA; Oliver Roden Cotswolds Catchment EA; James Cousins Swindon Borough Council; Sue Humm Gloucestershire County Council; Trevor Cramphorn Cotswold Rivers Trust. Apologies Sophia Price Cotswold District Council; Jon Taylor Wiltshire Council; Karen Parker EA; John Wilshaw Swindon Community Forest; Sarah Mason Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.

1.50pm Round table introduction by all those present; presentation by Dave (xxx ) from the Down Ampney Village Hall Committee on the restoration of the Hall and the local facilities that have been supported by GRCC through the Parish Plan

2.00pm Introduction to the 2nd Cotswold Pilot Meeting : Welcome and Introduction

CS welcomed all the existing and new members to the pilot steering group. This included confirmation that the focus area of the Cotswold Catchment was to be the Upper Thames Catchment. (Though the area technically pilot includes the Windrush and the Evenlode Catchments as well.) CS précised the back ground to the Defra pilots details of which can be found at [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/catchments](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/catchments). CS explained how the pilots were being evaluated by Defra and that there had now been the quarterly review. CS thanked all those that had completed the stakeholder questionnaire. JP reiterated that it is very much a chance for all organisations to raise issues and opportunities to Defra and build integrated projects that can secure funding for NGO’s, deliver for the Local Authorities and Agencies; and support sustainable farming and develop resilient communities.

2.20pm Oliver Roden presented the draft Cotswolds Catchment Plan as produced by the EA.

OR invited questions through the presentation, with questions being answered by OR, PSTP and RA.

 A copy of the presentation will accompany the notes. The EA also tabled the Upper Thames Catchment Management Summary – the pdf of which is also attached to the notes. Questions were asked by various group members. JT ( NFU) asked about water flows and phosphate levels being blamed on farming, when there is clear evidence to suggest over abstraction and phosphates coming from water treatment plants. P ST P said that there were a lot of myths about abstraction and that there were separate EA departments dealing with these issues. P St P said that the EA worked closely with Thames Water with their Asset management plan, water management plan and there was now an EA Sustainable Abstraction Planning team. The group said that it was essential that there was someone from TW on the pilot steering group.

 JP said she had had a meeting with TW in Reading and that TW were going to put forward a representative but had not achieved that in time scale for this meeting. TC (Cotswold Rivers Trust) said there were big problems addressing sewage flows and abstraction and this was key to delivering WFD in the Cotswolds catchment. TC said it was essential for the pilot group to have a clearer understanding of the issues.

JP asked if the EA plan was visionary for the longer term, or was it a short term plan to achieve quicker wins. P St P said that the wider issues were address in the River Basin Management Plan. JP said that Defra had indicated that the purpose of the pilots was to have a longer term integrated vision to feed into the next 6 year cycle/phase of RBMP planning and that the plan should reflect this.

SN ( Catchment Sensitive Farming) said that it was interesting that the plan seemed to be mostly river based, and that the CSF was also land use based, and how the two needed to work together. SN said that it made sense for the CC Pilot group to also be the CSF steering group.

 SH (GCC) said that the County Council were now the local flood authority and part of that role was to produce a strategy. It was important to integrate the two. JP said that most present had either projects or strategies that related to the Upper Thames Catchment area and that was the aim to produce an integrated plan that works for all.

RH said that it needed to be a group plan, with an evidence base, direction and actions. CS that this would be key to planning and delivering an integrated plan. J C ( Swindon Borough Council) asked how the plan fitted with the relevant planning authority as the implementation of SUDS was very important for achieving WFD in the future, and this in reality, was the element that seemed to get squeezed out by the developers. SH asked why Cotswold District Council was not present. JP said CDC were on the steering group but did not have the resources to attend. SH said that Lawrence King from CDC would be important to include. JP said her contact was Sophia Price and would email LK to join the group.

RH summed up and discussed actions and timings for the review of the plan by the steering group. OR said that if the partners could be kind enough to return comments to the EA within the next 4 weeks, by the 15th June, the EA could present the revised plan with the revisions back to the group at the next meeting on the 27th June. JP asked if it was OK to circulate the current version to the wider consultative group. OR asked that the EA would prefer to have the pilot steering group comments back to include the revisions were made and agreed at the meeting on the 27th. Then the integrated plan could be circulated to the wider consultative group.

RH said that it was also important for the pilot steering group to have a terms of reference. CS offered to look into providing a draft terms of reference for the next meeting.

A brief discussion took place regarding agenda items for the next meeting. The group felt that there should be a 5 minute presentation from each member to explain their organisation, its roles and responsibilities, any projects or duties that were interrelated to delivering WFD in the Upper Thames Catchment. Pilot member agreed the basic agenda items as:

* joint review of updated EA catchment plan & discussion of what is missing, also thinking about how to make it accessible for a wider audience,
* review of the aims and key objectives for each member organisation,
* agreeing terms of reference for the steering group,
* discussing opportunities for joint funding bids.

It was also suggested that members be asked in advance if they wished to add agenda items. RH also asked OR if for the next meeting there could be large scale maps to show pilot groups areas of work. Partner strategies had already been referenced in the draft plan – but more detail of partner activity was now required.The next meeting was agreed to be held at the same venue ( Down Ampney Village Hall) on June 27th to begin at 1.00pm with lunch, run from 1.30pm to 4 pm followed by tea and cake.

 Ends