



## Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel Meeting

### Minutes

*These minutes are written as verbatim, however due to the nature of hybrid meetings times when partner comments or agreement haven't been recorded are indicated in brackets.*

**Monday 20 February 2023, 11.30am - 1.30pm**

**De La Wyle meeting room, Bourne Hill, Salisbury and online via Teams**

**Present:** Emma Sayer **ES (Chair)**, Claire Selman **CLS**, Hugh Morrison **HM**, Henry Oliver **HO**, Colin Shell **CS**, Nick Holder **NH**, Lynn Trigwell **LT**, Ross Simmonds **RS**, Jan Tomlin **JT**, Nichola Tasker **NTa**, Phil Foxwood **PF**, Natalie Matthee **NM** (note taker)

**Abbreviations:** Steering Committee **SC**, Partnership Panel **PP**, World Heritage Site **WHS**, Coordination Unit **CU**, English Heritage **EH**, National Trust **NT**, Historic England **HE**, Wiltshire Council **WC**, Trust Transition Board **TTB** Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological & Historical Research Group **ASAHRG**

Action	Lead	Status
CLS: amend TTB minutes with LT & CS feedback, re-save and circulate PP and TTB minutes as final copies	CLS	
CLS: Add sub numbering to future agendas/minutes from NTa recommendation	CLS	
ES: to draft letter with question for JT to take to National Trust lawyer asking if National Trust could contribute and play a role in the new CIO.	ES	
CLS: to set a meeting date for all Partnership Panel members to discuss the vacant Partnership Manager post.	CLS	
CLS: when the source of funding and name/s of facilitators for facilitated discussion are confirmed, CLS work with partners to arrange facilitated discussion for late April.	CLS	
HO & HM: introduce idea of facilitated discussion to steering committees at next meeting.	HO & HM	
RS: Request representatives from international unit join a facilitated discussion so that we can consider external perspectives from other WHS.	RS	
ES: ES, HO, HM, NH and LT will work together on a communication to steering committees following the meeting.	ES	
CLS: Circulate update on periodic reporting to steering committees.	CLS	
All: go back to organisations to confirm position on contribution to CIO hosting the Coordination Unit and the potential nature of that contribution.	All	

Approx time	Who	
0.00	ES	I suggest before we start we introduce ourselves.
	HO	At this meeting I'm representing Avebury Steering Committee (SC) members as the Chair of that group. I sit on the SC as Director for the North Wessex Downs AONB, which is hosted by Wiltshire Council.
	HM	I chair the Stonehenge SC and represent partners on that committee.
	CS	Representative for the Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological & Historical Research Group (ASAHRG) and I represent ASAHRG on both SCs.
		(While virtual meeting was being set up the sound dipped for introductions from partners attending online)
	NH	I have recently been appointed as Cabinet member for Environment and Climate Change for Wiltshire Council (WC). That covers a wide variety of challenging and interesting issues which specifically today that covers the relationship we have with the World Heritage Site (WHS). I will be the elected member for Partnership Panel (PP) meetings going forward.
	ES	<p>Before we start the meeting Nichola asked me to clarify what I said about recordings. I think it would be helpful for recordings of these meetings to be kept and circulated along with the minutes. The intention would be to the people at the meeting. I've had some feedback from the SC meetings that it was helpful having a recording of the meeting that people could refer back to and reflect upon. I think we do cover a lot of ground in the meetings, it would be helpful in the interests of transparency and clarity to have a recording that is kept. We can discuss how long that needs to be kept for at another date, but certainly in the interim that would be my recommendation going forwards. OK, lots of nods around. Thank you.</p> <p>I'm going to open the meeting, and am pleased to see we don't have any apologies and I would really like to welcome Claire Selman to her first PP. One of the biggest changes since last time we met is Claire is now in post and has made enormous headway in a very short period of time and I'm delighted to have her here today.</p> <p>In terms of introduction, Claire &amp; I before the meeting had a look at the agenda and recognised that the arrival of WC letter needs to be further up the agenda so we will be moving this to item 3 and the Coordination Unit (CU) update will go further down the agenda.</p>
5.00	ES	<p><b>Item 2.0</b></p> <p>To talk very briefly about the minutes and matters arising, what's interesting is it's a long time since we had a PP meeting by itself so one of the issues in terms of communicating actions and delivery is the fact that there can be so long between. I hope you've had chance to look at the actions and draft minutes of the April PP meeting. Does anyone have any comments?</p>
	LT	There is one comment from WC in that all were agreed and WC abstained from that and said they would need to consult.
	ES	Was that the April 22 meeting or the Trust Transition Board (TTB)?
	LT	Apologies yes TTB
	ES	Do we agree on the minutes of the PP from April 22?
	NTa	I do, but can I comment that it would be best to have some sub numbering on the minutes.
	ES	Yes I agree. And we confirm that these minutes are accepted and approved. Moving on to the TTB minutes of November 22, Lynn is that the item you wish to

		raise. Is that item 4 or 5? While Lynn is looking does anyone else have any comments? No.
	LT	I think if you just note that WC sought to consider its position rather than agree.
	ES	I would like to highlight under item 5.0 re SC meetings and WC's comment. We need to understand what wasn't working with the existing governance and do we know what we need to do differently and I think that's a really helpful starting point for some of the discussions we'll come to later. I just wanted to highlight that because I'm not sure we've ever squared that bit.
	CS	I would like to raise the point I raised with Claire regarding the CBA being used without saying what CBA stands for. CBA to me is Council of British Archaeology.
10.00	ES	The other thing I would like to draw from the minutes is that there was some feedback that's worth coming back to in future discussions that there was a sense of engagement and a willingness to move forward in a collaborative and positive way. That's what I'd like to see us do as a PP and wider partnership
	CS	There was another point that for the TTB, a lot of the items are out of the remit of the TTB.
	ES	That's a really good point, because the meeting was set up as a TTB and PP extraordinary meeting.
	CS	It would be helpful for that to be appropriately worded.
	ES	<b>Item 3.0</b> Item 3 on the agenda is now the update from WC. We've all received the letter, and can I ask Nick to start off the discussion.
15.00	NH	<p>Its important to understand the context of this. We have been asked by other members of the panel to clarify our position with regards to our approach. We've tried to get us some way forward with regards to elements of the Sam Rose report. I just want to be clear that the purpose of sending the letter out was for the PP solely. This is by no means meant to be confrontational, its by no means meant to do anything other than set out the position of WC.</p> <p>There has been a considerable amount of work carried out with regards to the Sam Rose report, which was published 10 months ago. From our perspective , there hasn't been the progress responding to the suggestions put forward in that report. We are committed to the concept of what Sam describes as an executive board (EB). We're not bothered about what that's called. We are in agreement that there needs to be detailed representation below that EB with an advisory panel or however it would be termed which would be seen as advisors and influencers to the EB.</p> <p>We are relaxed about whether that's an EB of 7 or 8 plus the Chair. Personally I think there is some merit in an EB of 8 plus the Chair which allows for the 4 statutory bodies to be represented and maybe as Sam suggests the Chair of the advisory board for Avebury and Stonehenge as de facto. This is my personal opinion. The council are relaxed as to 7 or 8 plus the chair.</p> <p>I think what we are more concerned with is getting agreement to the structure and then understand how we can move forward to implement the management plan and things that need to be done to make both sides more effective and deliver what we need to deliver. This is by no means wanting to reduce the influence of very important local knowledge, local stakeholders, local interest groups. Its very much about having a governance structure that funnels up to an EB who will then ultimately be accountable for making the decisions for the WHS</p>

		<p>We are aware, we've had confidential discussions with our other partners. We're encouraged by comments they have given to us suggesting they are broadly aligned to the concept of the Sam Rose report. And that alignment could, potentially, include some additional funding streams from those partners. I haven't said it will definitely happen, but what is clear to us as WC is that having a more effective governance structure in place which has clear terms of reference makes it easier for those other bodies to potentially apply for and be awarded funding for the project. I'm really happy to take questions.</p>
	ES	<p>Thank you very much Nick. Before I open up to the floor, I would just like to encourage us to focus on the things which we can agree on and maintain a positive approach. There has been a lot of history over the last several years, but in particular the last year, around this particular project. I think it would be fair to say that recollections may vary as to how the TTB was set up and what it was designed to deliver.</p> <p>I have actually gone back to read the bid document for the application and that sets out quite clearly the approved purposes for which we received the money. We need to understand as a group that we are responsible for spending the money that we've had already properly, and also we need to be as positive as we can to try and find a solution to how we can move forwards.</p> <p>Having said that, can I ask for comments or questions for Nick regarding the WC letter. It would be fair to say that my phone hasn't stopped ringing since the letter went out and I've had lots of conversations with members of the panel and with numerous members of the SCs. I would like to come to SC chairs first.</p>
20.00	HM	<p>Thank you Nick, that was very useful and takes some of the heat out of the letter which we've had a lot of responses from and we felt it was only appropriate to share the letter with our committee members. Your comments seem to detract from WC's previous stance which wasn't very compromising at all in not accepting 8. From my perspective, I worked quite hard as I could see that Option 1 could actually get something done. It was more compact, lighter, agile but I needed to know that I had the support of the committee to support it.</p> <p>I was pleasantly surprised, as I expected community members to support option 2. I managed to get support, and then WC damaged that with the thoughts presented for the EB. Even though we asked WC to reconsider that, that line did not move. And unfortunately, I'm going to struggle to sell that to the SC effectively. Its not my job to sell it to them, but its hard to see the difficulty we've been through, to be able to suggest that WC have handled that very well. That's my own personal feeling, because it just seemed absolutely uncompromising. I think Avebury's position was slightly different from the outset, in that their members probably wouldn't really ever support option 1.</p>
	HO	<p>Yes I think its worth rewinding to the Taking the Past into the Future project, which the TTB oversees. Because we got into a difficult situation where the governance review seems to have become the thing. If you look at the terms of the refence for that work, its about the future resilience of the unit and the partnership, and its principally about setting up an independent charity which might or might not have hosted the unit. Quite a lot of water has flown under that bridge. And then, in the light of whatever was proposed to look at where there were any requirements to amend the governance to take into account the fact that a new CIO has been set up.</p> <p>But what's happened, and I've tried to trace the genesis of this, I think is where from the first consultants Lemon Drizzle we then moved on to Sam and his</p>

25.00	<p>engagement and the focus was not exclusively but largely on a governance review. And I think that's unfortunate as it is a case of the tail wagging the dog in terms of the lottery funding. I think its worth emphasizing that point, because the last time we had a governance review as a WHS the consultant Egeria commented on how well the partnership worked and how productive and effective it was. Even though it was two parts of the site and at the time we had two separate management plans although now we have one. So there isn't necessarily, based on previous experience, a problem with the governance it was simply that reviewing the governance was seen as a necessary consequence of setting up a charity. The extent to which the governance would need to change was partly dependent on whether the CIO was contributing financially.</p> <p>I have huge sympathy with the position in the letter about funding and spreading funding. I will put on record again that from my perspective from the AONB, I've always been open to the possibility of the AONB partnership helping to contribute towards the funding of the WHS because it feels to me like that's part of being a partnership.</p> <p>Having said that, in relation to the Sam Rose proposals, similarly to Hugh my view personally was option 1 with a balanced board was a wearable proposal, because I saw it had some merit given the sheer complexity and geographical spread of the WHS. Whereas option 2 is more akin to a standard WHS governance in the UK. However, when I took that, and I tried quite hard to make sure the SC has sight of those proposals and could comment on the recommendations as early as possible, we had a virtual session during lockdown. However when it came to the SC meeting to consider option 1 and specifically WC's amendment of it, which I understand was backed by other members of the PP, it was very clear that the Avebury SC were entirely opposed to option 1 and felt that it would be wholly unacceptable in terms of local governance. And that was option 1 whether balanced or not. They were particularly unhappy with the unbalanced board. I was therefore in a position where that is, given the SC is there to make the decision, as chair of that group have relayed that.</p> <p>In relation to the letter specifically, its happened after quite a long period of not much communication about what was going on to the stakeholders. There is pretty consistently a frustration that something that we had debated and rejected has come back again with an element of pressure in relation to the future of the unit. Regarding local community representation, there was concern that under Sam's proposal each community had to identify someone who could represent them on the board and they were saying we cant do that because we have several parishes with different priorities/needs/views and theres no mechanism to identify one person to do that. The same with the landowners in that there needed to be representatives on both parts of the WHS.</p> <p>I've read all the responses that people have sent me. One thing that's worth mentioning is that several people have argued that the CIO and its fundraising potential which you refer to is in danger of being overlooked. My personal view is that I'm frustrated that we seem to be spending a lot of time reviewing governance when actually we've got an awful lot of work to do on the Management Plan Review, CIO, Periodic Report. I thought at our last meeting that the SCs and PP had agreed a way forward. The response I've had from SC members was largely quite dismayed, you will have seen those. There is a lot that we did agree on. The critical thing for me is that with the current system I don't feel we've ever had the processes in place to make it work as efficiently as</p>
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		it could regarding the roles of the SCs, Chairs, PP. They're broadly set out, but we don't have a process for making sure its clear and the unit can do their job without endlessly going round in circles
30.00	NTa	To give my thoughts where the priorities should lie having heard this. For me, this might sound simplistic, but my overwhelming feeling about this is that as the PP we will all need to try and find a way to move forward together. If we've got to a point where I felt that the last SCs, many of the members were feeling in despair with a lack of trust and might want to walk away. I might be putting words in their mouth, but there was a feeling that we might break up as a group. The letter that we've had from WC seems to indicate that perhaps WC might, under certain circumstances, need to walk away. So my overwhelming feeling is that we all need to stick at it together. As responsible members of the PP, in spite of the baggage and the history, we need to be looking forward as a way to keep everybody in the group. At the moment that might seem quite hard, but that's my commitment, my position. Previously, as Henry noted, EH supported WC as we felt they were clear and there was a red line that they wouldn't be able to support an 8 + chair. And it certainly did coincide better with English Heritage's (EH) position in that we went for 6/7 + chair. But I think there are compromises we can make, and we can also live with an 8 and a chair. I hear what Hugh is saying about we could have got it over the line 8/9 months ago. But I think its beholden on all of us to hold the pieces and members of this together. That's where I am and that's where EH is.
		(Due to the nature of hybrid meetings, the verbal agreement of some partners was not picked up in the recording. JT fully supported NTA's comment and agreed NT is in the same position as EH - NT could work with an Exec Board of eight members and a chair)
35.00	RS	<p>We remain committed members of this partnership and will continue to be so. When Claire's post is coming up in 18 months time, we will review the funding for that post and will continue to do so mindful of our own funding commitments and challenges, as we can't commit beyond that period. There's a point worth picking up on as something Henry touched upon. Historic England's (HE) view on whether it's 6/7/8 Panel members is entirely led by the partnership. We have no particular views one way or the other as to what should be settled on. Hearing both Hugh and Henry's comments though, it's about where do we go from here and that's where my struggle is. What do we do next to find next a way forward? Do we focus on the Trust element of it. The governance? This would appear to be challenging for some. But if we were not to focus on governance that would appear to be a challenge for the council as well. Is there something here around, thinking ahead, working on both governance and the trust together at the same time in a meaningful way? I don't know how we achieve that, it would be good to see what people say around the table re the letter? I do think, wanting to think positively, what do we do next is to deliver on the management plan, to pick up what I think are the more substantive elements here, the item related to Claire's work.</p> <p>Somehow, we have to work across all of these things together, we've got to find a way forward.</p> <p>We remain committed to doing it, HE will be here for the long haul, I think it's important to say that. But equally we're here to support the communities. The Trust is an important element we need to focus on but there are challenges. It was interesting to see comments from others on the Trust, but I don't think a Trust is going to be the silver bullet, I would like to be proved wrong, but I think it is something we should definitely explore. There will be challenges that</p>

		<p>shouldn't be underestimated, and there are other models that Sam alluded to that we can explore in more detail from around the county of other WHS. I don't think we've really explored those enough. We have the resources to do that from the WHS team here at HE who could offer some guidance. Going forward it's what do next. I appreciate each party's position, we're here to respond to what the partnership wants to do. We have no position that will block those pathways, we'll work to the consensus.</p>
		<p>(Due to the nature of hybrid meetings, the verbal agreement of some partners was not picked up in the recording)</p>
	ES	<p>Thank you Ross that was very helpful. I think we need to come back to the message that has come from the SCs in response to the WC letter, which is very much one of where are the democratic principles of decision making. How can we actually move forward to create a different way of working and more positive approach.?</p>
40.00	JT	<p>Certainly from the National Trust's (NT) point of view, I think we're all aware we own around a third of the land in the WHS and are wholly committed long term to conservation there-of. That's what we're doing day in day out. I do find it unhelpful to focus in on one small element of funding of the care that we give as a group. Certainly for NT there is a really significant financial commitment going forward. I did remind myself looking at the previous Periodic Report we're looking at £3million on conservation alone so I think when we're talking about funding this isn't just about funding two posts, this is about how we are committed to the conservation of the entire WHS. This is a much bigger issue.</p> <p>I absolutely support that we need to look at how we're going to move forwards. I'm really aware that as a group we've committed a significant amount of time to talking and I feel that we're actually making the progress that we should be making. I think the timescale to consider the letter which was released via an attachment to an agenda, which I find quite remarkable. I think the timescale has really been unhelpful. So from the NT's point of view I would like to hear how now we're proposing to move forwards to actually deliver that care and conservation of the WHS, which is why we're here.</p>
45.00	CS	<p>My first thought is that there needs to be a reality check for the PP. Its role is to carry out what the SCs decide should be happening and assisting the CU in this. In the management plan the description of the PP is to coordinate actions affecting both parts of the WHS and to oversee the work of the CU. It does not say concerning policy, people should read the remit of the SCs. My next thought as I attended both SCs it was apparent that Option 1 was rejected and not acceptable. At which point it was decided or recommended that it wasn't taken to a vote. The meeting was in fact for people to vote on the proposed governance review, whether 7 /8 is partly irrelevant. There is a question of whether the PP has a right to put the Governance Review again to the SCs. In my view it would be the SCs decision whether to invite the PP to come back with it.</p> <p>In relation to WC's letter, I think its important to note that its brought to the forefront that funding is a serious problem. Funding is not going to be less of a problem. It can be said immediately that the transition to a CIO that would take over the running of the CU managing the WHS would alleviate at least but not remove WC's contribution. If there were a governance review I don't see WC financial position changing. We know from comments at previous meetings of PP that the other institutional members would find finance difficult. So in one sense considering the governance review rather than the TTB to transition to a CIO to take over the running of the CU has involved two years of looking at governance and has delayed totally what could now be close to being a workable structure.</p>

		There is a broad understanding outside of the WHS community that our WHS is not working well. This is exacerbated through the loss of 2 staff from the CU. I would strongly advise WC and other panel members to consider that the governance proposal as put to the SCs has been rejected, it would be unwise to put it forward again and hopefully we can work towards what was the original intention.
50.00	PF	<p>DCMS's view, and I use that term lightly as I'm not speaking on behalf of everybody, I would say that generally the State Party's view is that we want everything to work well and effectively. DCMS or its Ministers are not going to take sides as to who is right or wrong. This is going to be difficult for us to advise on what we think the correct structure/governance is. That is something to be resolved here/in these groups. I am here to support where I can.</p> <p>As a reflection of what I've heard and read to date, there seems to be a scenario of WC stepping away from funding/ hosting/ supporting which is not desirable for the site. I don't think not being able to involve the local stakeholders effectively is equally going to be practical for the sites. Not taking SC members along is equally not good. There does need to be a middle ground found. I've also come late to this, so haven't heard the last 6 – 10 years. There is a point where we need to accept that lots of mistakes have been made or a lack of communication or different people offering opinions and moving on. There needs to be, in any reconciliation or compromise situation, an agreement to wash the past away and try and move forward from where we are. Otherwise it could run and run.</p>
	ES	I would like to reflect that; I've gone back to members and heard everyone's comments. If you look at the roles detailed in the management plan for the various parts of our existing structure, one could argue that the PP whose primary role is to ensure that sufficient resources exist to support the CU to run effectively and to deliver projects arising from the Management Plan. One could argue that we actually haven't made a huge amount of progress in the PP's role. The part of Sam Rose's report that everybody agreed with was the need for a stronger more influential CU. From what I've heard, perhaps that doesn't need to sit within WC and I know that originally talking to Lynn and Melanie the original intention was that WC would step away from hosting the unit and enable an independent trust to take on that responsibility. It would become like EH/EH/NT and become a funder. I would like to clarify for the record WC's long term commitment to the partnership if, in light of the letter, the SCs, who are the decision makers, say we do not wish to pursue the governance review and Option 1 and move the level of decision making from the SCs to the EB. Is your position that you would step away from hosting the unit and that would call into question funding moving forward? Has WC debated whether they would, if an independent trust were set up, contribute like any other partner to the core costs of a trust. Is that something that could potentially be the middle ground?
	LT	In fairness to say, Colin's point was just that. The original intention was to move the CU into a Trust at that time. I can't speak for now and will have to take that back. At that time the council was quite content with that moving forward. I don't think it had any intention in saying that it wouldn't contribute to some level. I don't its saying that it doesn't want to here either. It just needs to make sure that what its doing with its funding as tax payers money is working best for the WHS. I don't think what you're putting on the table there has ever been rejected by WC. I have a feeling it might have been rejected by others, but that's the point that Colin was making that this whole project was to move the CU and funding into a more equitable, balanced independent position so that it had that autonomy. WC isn't precious about hosting it, we would like to be an equitable



		partner. I think based on the history that's what our position is but if you want clarity on our current position I'd have to take that back. But it would be interesting to know what the views of others are.
55.00	ES	Can we move around the table now and talk to the other major partners as to whether they could make financial contribution to the CU. Is that something that we could consider?
	RS	I would like to ask the Council what's happening with the vacant post. We remain committed and will continue to be so - and will review Claire's post when the opportunity arises, we're not stepping away. I've advocated for quite some time that hosting it, whether in WC or as Henry suggested through the format of an AONB or similar, is helpful. I would like to ask that question again about the vacant post and where that is currently. How might we use those available funds at the Council in the timescales we have, which could be a challenge. How do we use that post in the interim while we have the funding?
	LT	If we keep with the trust discussion first and then I'll pick up on the staffing.
1.00.00	NTa	EH's position about CIO /trust, we did do some work last year talking to our lawyers about our position. We could be involved; it is legally possible and if we were invited and if this was the structure, to be part of a board of that trust, we could be involved. We have however not supported the idea of a trust, and remember I have always said I wouldn't stand in anybody's way, but we haven't supported it because we felt it was another layer of bureaucracy. Another organisation with its own terms of reference, with its own Trustees – and we have not as a board been very good at managing our governance and bureaucracy anyway in recent years However, I think you're suggesting Emma, is that we might do away with the PP and only have a charity. So that does begin to address my feeling of too many panels. It would be something we would look at. I would have to have a little bit more time to think about would I be equally able to seek funding if the unit was sat in a different charity, I might have to take advice for that. Because before we'd always looked at both together, so I've been thinking about seeking funding for the unit where it is or certainly not sitting in a charity. I might have to take some advice on that. But there are possibilities there and I'm not seeing any massive problems at the moment but there are bits I would have to take advice on. I hope that's helpful.
	ES	Thank you, it would be helpful to have that conversation. There are a couple of existing WHSs that have foundations that work in that way. One of them is Jurassic Coast, and a different model is the Lake District foundation that generates substantial funds for the delivery of the management plan. If its helpful I could circulate the management structures of those organisations.
	JT	Please could you clarify the question, are you asking if we were to disband the PP and set up an independent charity would the NT as a charity financially support an independent charity?
	ES	Yes I'm asking if the CU sits within an independent CIO and therefore the management bit of the WHS, the people that coordinate the activity on the ground, will sit within the charity and be funded by a partnership funding agreement between partners who are mostly around this table and who would, due to the CIO status, be able to generate funding from external sources. As the Lake District Foundation and Jurassic Coast does.
	JT	I've asked that question to our NT lawyers twice and twice I've had the very clear answer that as a charity we are unable to financially support another charity. But if you want to supply a clear question in writing, but there is a limit to how many times I can ask our lawyers the same question. So if you're asking me can this charity the NT financially support another charity, I've asked that question twice

		and the answer is no. If the question is being refined, then I will put it to the lawyers again.
	ES	Thank you, that's really helpful because the NT was a founding member of the Lake District Foundation. It does give, according to their annual accounts, a minimum of £10,000 a year to the Lake District Foundation and when I queried this with the general manager in the Lake District he said that the feels that NT gets huge value for money for the way the foundation works and generates 5 x this amount on an annual basis to deliver activities. Perhaps you're right Jan, its about the question that we need to be asking the NT and I welcome the ability to go back and ask that question again so thank you.
	CS	In question to Jan that supporting the trust actually involved funding, if the NT isn't able to provide funding as its financial circumstances need to be taken into account, my question would be would NT support the CIO that was running the WHS in what would be seen to be the appropriate way. Support can be in many ways without having to provide money.
	JT	I'm not sure if that's a question or not. But if Emma can put down in writing a question I can take to the lawyers. I've gone through this a number of times, I will do it again but I need a clear question. It's a very small team, and so far they've been consistent in their response.
	ES	I think Jan also it would need to be taken further up the NT, if they are supporting a very similar model on paper it looks that way, it would be slightly strange to be given different legal advice.
	JT	This isn't the place for the discussion, but if you let me know what it is you would like an answer to I will ask.
1.05.00	HO	Just a couple of points. One is picking up your point Lynn, I'm sure there is something to be said there is an element of what you were mentioning in the genesis of this proposal. But I think a large part of the motivation from my memory was trying to bring in resilience against the situation presented in the letter with WC wanting to spread the financial risk, needing a bigger buy in. But there was a resilience point and I think the reason why the idea of the unit being hosted by the CIO fell out of favour was as it was felt to be a huge financial drag for a charity in the beginning to have HR, insurance etc costs. Whereas it could raise modest amounts of money that could support us as a PP, which has been mentioned as one of our principal roles to try and find the money to do what the SCs have identified as the priorities in the management plan. So I'm not disagreeing with it as a possibility as I know how well hosting semi-autonomous unit can work with a wide range of contributors with my experience in the AONB where WC is the host. But that was one of the reasons why we decided it wasn't a great idea originally.
	NTa	I want to raise the point about the money that a CIO might raise. One assumes that, one of the advantages of a CIO is that it can apply for funding that the Unit is not currently able to under WC, indeed that is what EH does now as a charity separate from government. But that will be a fluctuating amount, that might fund part of a post for example, but there will need to be continually and consistently a revenue stream that supports everything that we want of the Unit. The more advanced and higher level management post that we want say, and a more ambassadorial role, which we've always agreed on before. So (even if we set up a CIO) we will still be asking the same questions (about how to fund the ongoing revenue costs of the Unit), and I think we all wouldn't want that burden to go onto the same isolated members of this group in the future. The same requirements will be there for us all to think about how we support that revenue even through there should be the ability to get project money on top. I don't

		think you can forget that the need for day to day revenue, the paying the salary stream, will still be there.
	ES	Absolutely and in good practice terms you would ideally have a transition period and a partnership funding agreement could be put in place saying that for the next 5 years this is what it will look like and this is the financial contribution that WC/HE/NT/AONB etc will make there's even been some talk from Parish councils if they could but 1p on their precept. People have started to talk in inventive ways about how they might be able to help in that way.
	RS	I just wanted to pick up on Jan and your points about other models around the country. I have asked the international team Alex and Helen to look at this in more detail. Sam Rose did pick up on some of these models and I think we should explore it. If I could ask of Jan as well, thinking of some of those models where NT is engaged, it would be worth exploring those as well. I can ask the team to do that from an international perspective across the country, and I've asked that, but Jan I think it would be helpful if, apologies as I don't know the internal arrangements, those thoughts could also be considered nationally across the NT as well. It would appear there are slight differences in approach across NT?
	ES	I think we need to bring this section to a conclusion. What are we going to do next? Are we going to the SCs and say we've asked all members of the PP to go back to their organisations and explore their positions about setting up the independent trust to host the unit, and whether the impact might be on a partnership funding agreement allowing that to happen over an extended period. I would say, it's really got to be a minimum of 3 years. Most partnership funding agreements have a minimum life of 3 years. Is that something we could agree on as a panel, to give a recommendation to SCs?
1.10.00	PF	I don't disagree with three years, but briefly I know that publicly funded organisations from government will struggle because it needs to be within a spending review period. So in principle I agree but practically that might not work. Two points, a) the CIO in my understanding of that model, you can tailor it to be what you want so if there are concerns by lawyers or other organisations you can factor that into articles at the beginning and we all agree it. If there are any concerns with the trust, it would be useful if they could be addressed. I don't see them as being insurmountable. As an aside people keep asking me about a DCMS owned car park, if we ever find out who owns this where the money goes I am more than happy to make sure that this money goes into this trust. If we had this trust and equitable funding agreement, what does that do to the governance model? Do we still not have this issue of the governance? Is WC and the rest of the panel happy if the governance stays as it is? If the PP were replaced by a trust panel?
	ES	You're absolutely right that there will still be a piece of work to do around where the decision making responsibility sits in terms of how things function. We agreed at the last meeting, although I take Lynn's point that WC said they wanted to go away and discuss it, to pause the existing governance element of the Trust Transition Project but move forward in the establishing of a CIO. And the reason the governance is in there is in the original bid to NLHF they recognise that depending on what type of charity you set up will have an impact on how the governance functions. And how it needs to work differently or better. That is an element that will have to be discussed. But at the moment, it does feel like there's an agreement that the lack of trust that exists between the PP and SCs is a barrier to us moving forward together with the governance review in its current form.
	RS	That is an important question you raised and I would like to hear WC response. I also want to go back to the point of the vacant post.

1:15:00	NH	In terms of my initial response, I think we would be interested in securing an understanding of how the partnership funding arrangement would work, particularly if that satisfies our comments around as in our letter a more equitable funding arrangement. An equitable funding arrangement doesn't necessarily mean funding under the current structure, it means a more equitable and different funding arrangement. If that is more equitable that probably satisfies our concerns. But I do agree in the points raised in that where does that leave us with governance going forward. You mention Chair 3 – 5 years, I have to say for WC if the current governance isn't changed in that 3 – 5 years that could prove to be a stumbling block. Because our view is very clear, the two points that we made about governance and equitable funding are inextricably linked. I have a question for Henry and Hugh, Colin was very adamant that from his perspective the SCs have rejected any form of governance. Is that your opinion that there is no point to go back to the SCs to say we want to readdress the issue of governance?
	HM	I think at this time that's actually right, because like I said there was a window of opportunity where option 1 might have got over the line, unamended. Whereas now, the trust has gone down not up and as you would have read there's been a lot of concern. And that's what we're fairly trying to represent. think this would be difficult now but it was clear that, and the video is still online so you can watch it, but I believe I will have trouble to convince members that that was a way forward at the moment. But if we can work together to get things done perhaps there'd be more confidence in working relationships and it could be realistic.
1:20:00	HO	I think the answer is yes for a rejection of the governance proposals and we did delve into that at the meeting. It was complicated by the fact that the compromised proposal was brought forward of 7 + 1 but I did make sure that we also asked everyone what about 8 + 1 which was emphatically against. In relation to the letter, the wording was something like it is neither efficient or effective use of WC resources, my advice would be assuming that the obligations for OUV is where the focus should be rather than the governance progressing when the CIO isn't in place yet.
	NH	Its very important though to understand that were we to be in a CIO, governance of that CIO is essential to that work. Its what Nichola and Ross have said, we are not going to invest time in investigating in a CIO without the governance of that new body being a fundamental part of that discussion. We would need to know, if we were to support it financially, what the governance arrangements would be, under what jurisdiction and how that money would be spent.
	HO	Understandably. I think there are two stages to this, setting up the CIO is one thing as agreed and set out in Sam's report. I think if we were to get to the stage of the CIO being in the position to host the unit, then that question, because that's where WC resources are going, funding and hosting the unit would have to be thrashed out. But that's what said in the Trust Transition Past into the Future terms of reference. We set up the trust and then think are there governance responses, and I think the governance consequences of a trust that doesn't host a unit are an awful lot simpler.
1:25:00	CS	The CIO in my view has to be purposed to take over as soon as possible rather than eventually the CU and it will need to know how its going to do that, and that is through governance. They go together. People aren't going to support a CIO if its not clear how its going to work. No ones going to support a trust that isn't going to work. So the principal purpose is to have a trust that will work. There are two aspects, if there is a least a couple/3 years of support for the unit to carry on and improve, if the trust is seen to be a good thing, there are people who will support it. I was introduced to someone who was interested to know

		how much it would cost to support the CU, someone with funds and wanting a personal project. Its essential that there's commitment to setting up the CIO with funding from the partners but if there's work that needs to be done at additional expense, I'm sure there are charities that would support doing this if the transition is seen to be a good thing.
	NTa	I agree with Colin, and I'm sorry Henry but I don't think it is two stage. In order to achieve what needs to be achieved across all our partners I do think we need to start thinking about a CIO with the idea (from the outset) that it will host the unit and the PP will dissolve. That is fundamental for EH. I couldn't support a CIO if it was happening in parallel, but if it were a replacement I could get behind it. I wonder whether, given this idea of what others have said, that we will run into the same discussion of governance (for a CIO). Whether at least this gives us an opportunity for a fresh start and for this (the governance issue) to be tackled in a different way. We're not putting the same thing on the table, we've talking about how the SCs wouldn't want to see the same idea anyway. If we are going to go down this road, maybe we should start in a fully collaborative way. Maybe there's a way of having the SCs and ourselves round the table, something that's facilitated, a discussion about what the CIO should be so that we're not seen to be behind closed doors. Perhaps we should be throwing it open the idea of a CIO, and it could be the vehicle it if hosts the CU that satisfies all partners. Going back to what I said at the start, it keeps everyone in the group if we implement it in a collaborative way.
	ES	That is a really good point Nichola, and over the weekend Colin suggested that we convene a working party to take forward and have a facilitated discussion about what that looks like with the aim of moving forward together.
	RS	Very supportive of a facilitated conversation with a wider set of partners, I also agree with Nichola and Colin on a broader approach rather than sequential that Henry was suggesting. The question is how do we facilitate that if at all, and I return to the question of WC's plan for the vacant post funds. And also timing, it's a positive conversation but lets be realistic on the timescales within that. The end of the next financial year isn't far away, whether we can achieve that and be mindful of the importance of a clear vision to give confidence in supporting this process in a collaborative way.
1:30:00	ES	To summarise, can the next step be to a facilitated discussion between representatives from SCs. We have to go wider than the Chairs and PP members to discuss a different type of CIO than what we've discussed to date. One that would hold the responsibility for hosting the unit. We're going back a number of years to the original purposes of the HLF funded bid. Is that something we can do in in the next month or so?
	HO	I'm not opposed to this at all, I want to do what works. I think we need to reflect on why it is Sam Rose emphatically ruled out any operational management of the WHS by the CIO, because he thought about it very hard and has lots of experience with the Jurassic Coast.
	ES	I can speak directly to that, because when we got to the empass last year where the major four partners said what was unacceptable for them, I went back to Sam Rose to ask where we go from here. He said perhaps the only way to get everyone moving together is for a CIO to host the unit.
	LT	The letter was to open this conversation up. If you go back to its original objective, to find an equitable funding arrangement, a governance arrangement that worked. This is about saying that we need to move forward. Whats being asked in the letter is that we make enough progress forward to get to that point. If we could get to something where we were looking to a properly funded arrangement by March 24, albeit maybe a slight transition, that the CIO is

		moving toward and WC hosts it for a temporary period until enough incomes coming in that may be the middle ground. If partners were putting money in by March 2024 to move us in the direction we need it to that may well answer both of those points. We would need to take that back, but whats being asked for in the letter is movement to getting to address those two points. That we're going round and not picking up on those two points. As long as we're going forward, these points are addressed and councillors are comfortable with how its moving forward, I don't think the timescales are difficult. Its about getting into funding rounds early enough
	ES	Can I suggest using finance from the vacant post to hold a facilitated discussion and between now and 10 April when that post becomes vacant and go back to SCs and identity representatives for that working party. I think Ross it would be useful to have representatives from the HE international unit so they can give some external perspective from other WHS. So we're looking for April when we convene that first facilitated discussion.
	LT	Talking of funding, there is funding still from the lottery bid. It was intended for use in setting up the CIO. There is also the second round of funding which is to do with the setting up which could fund that facilitation. With regard to the vacant post, the idea of not filling it is not to do with the money. This is about as Sam Rose and others suggested that the structure is not the best for delivering that independent unit and that possibly the managers post becoming vacant should be a higher grade. We're not filling it to give opportunity to review the structure. We're at the perfect point where there's an opportunity around staffing, considering the CIO and governance structure. While there are three things up in the air, it does mean that one is not beholden on the others. We should take that as a positive. With regards to the funding, we're not refiling to give flexibility. We have to consider how its used to keep the rest of the work going, its really important we don't stop and I know we need to work on the review of the management plan. My view is that the NHLF money is best for a facilitator and we possibly look at getting someone in to support the management plan review. I need to take that back, but the council has got the money set aside its how best can it be used to support movement with the two points set out in the letter but also to keep the work going in the background.
	ES	At the moment Claire's time is 90% committed to the Periodic Review and will be until the end of March if not beyond. Who is going to do the rest? Because there are a lot of other actions with the SCs. We have identified role descriptions for the Chairs and commitees, protocols for decisions between meetings, the need to improve communication through the website. I asked Phil how crucial is it we progress the management plan review at this stage with everything up in the air.
1:40:00	PF	For DCMS every site should have an up to date management plan with rules and regulations etc. But it shouldn't be something we're held to, it should be a tool to help us and the site. It should work for us, it shouldn't be something we have to do lots of work in order to deliver. If I can jump back to Hugh's point about the SCs and the two stage process, my understanding from that is that you were talking about the first stage as a way to re-build trust and work together to get to a better position to agree governance. I would support that its not possible to do that in two stages and you need to consider it as one. However my take was that rebuilding trust with the SCs is a really important point. My question to the SC Chairs is what would this facilitated cross group discussion on governance help, to me that sounds like a positive step. And for it to be as inclusive as possible. Is the Periodic Reporting, as an example of something that everyone is involved in, is this something that can further build trust. Thirdly, the Management Plan is something that needs to work for us. A consultant could come to write a 100 page report, but it might be easier to start within the groups

		to talk about the Management Plan to set down what the expectations and first steps are and then bring in a consultant. The principals of the management plan should come from the groups. My question for the SC chairs is what other ways could we rebuild trust.
	HO	I'm happy to respond whenever is the right time.
	NTa	(NTa comment in the chat: I am concerned that at present we are unsure if the NT are able to take part in a CIO. I think this is fundamental as they are such a key partners and we must find a way to keep them with us.) There have been initial meetings for the management plan review, we're on the cusp of that. I can hear positivity about what may be the way forward, but am anxious that the NT don't know whether they can work with a CIO. My feeling throughout all of this is we need to keep everyone in the boat. The NT would be a huge loss that we can't contemplate. We need to cautious that before excitement about a facilitated meeting to discuss the CIO that we've got to have NT with us.
	ES	I completely agree.
	CS	My understanding is there is a Management Plan working group, which is started in embryo. There is also, at the agreement of the SCs, a CIO steering group which must both be fully representative. My point is there should be appropriate consultation as well with the right expertise and experience.
	ES	I do feel we have moved slightly forwards, I would like us now to see if we could agree that we put this as a recommendation to the SCs who are meeting in March. I think that will be really important as a first step. I completely accept Nichola and Jan's points about the NT's position and am heartened that examples exist with the UK WH family where NT have negotiated those legal hurdles.
		(NTa left the meeting)
	RS	Just thinking about next steps, and I appreciate Lynn's point about the opportunity of the vacant post and how that might be used once we've given thought to the other things. Re the CU update and work plan, and where that area of focus should be. It's a huge body of work for anyone to do, and am anxious that we want to ensure we are focused on the right things. It would be helpful to have that conversation. All of this work needs to be done, but prioritised, do we need someone in post at a senior level? We've got an empty post and would welcome a conversation to see if we could put some extra money in to get someone in to deliver the transition work. This would be something for WC to consider.
	LT	It's a more detailed conversation about understanding what needs to be done and when, as a separate meeting to support Claire's work in the CU. I would like to talk to everyone about expectations and priorities for this year.
	NH	Regarding the vacant position Ross, as Lynn said we need to have a separate meeting to discuss this, this is extremely valid and I can sense this is causing concern.
1:50:00	ES	I would also like to be at that meeting.
	RS	Its more to ensure we are using the resources we collectively have to deliver on not just the management plan but work updates. I welcome the discussion in the round to understand the work plan and focus of the unit, it should be a shared conversation with everybody to build trust.
	ES	We will set a meeting date.
	CLS	I have a brief update of the work I have been doing which I can circulate. Very briefly for Periodic Reporting, the deadline is 31 March and I am working with partners to complete the survey. Its 200 questions, I'm 50% through. To confirm

		the process for sign off, that will go to the SCs. I've broken the survey into thematic consultation groups, as I'm keen that the report represents everyone.
	ES	I suggest Claire circulates this information to the PP and SCs to ensure all are on the same page.
	HO	To raise the matter of communication, quite a lot of fences are in disrepair because of the letter and how its been taken on the ground. If we are to make collaborative progress and mend those fences we need to do that quickly. Possibly with a communication swiftly, possibly from the chairs and WC to try and open the door to the engagement.
	ES	I agree for the Chairs and WC working together for a communication from this meeting to go to SCs as a result of this meeting. I found your opening statement Nick really helpful in that regard and would be a good starting point.
1:55:00	NH	I don't disagree with a communication. Would it be more sensible to have a holding response from this meeting that we can all agree on. For me its really important for the SCs to know this is not WC trying to bully, hopefully you understood that today. As much as we can send a letter, I assume your SCs trust you, so to come from you carries just as much weight as a joint communication.
	ES	Please could we have 10 minutes in the room to work on that.
	CS	I didn't read your letter that way, I thought it was useful that you were openly expressing your position financially. It was a valid letter in that respect.
	NH	That was certainly our intention, as we were asked by the partners to set out our position.
	CS	The SCs now really need have to have something to them, and after the SCs have considered things the information comes back to have a meeting for the next stage forward as a sequence.
	ES	Absolutely there needs to be a sequence.
	LT	We were hoping to explain the letter today before circulation. If you can go back and clarify this is not what WC were thinking and, Colin's picked up the intention, I think that would be really helpful
	HO	OK, I just think its really important that PP acknowledges to the SCs the fact the SCs, as constituted, make the decisions and I think there's a real sense from the SCs that that's not accepted by the PP. *
	ES	OK, let me take that away and circulate it to the PP.
	NH	I would be delighted to come to your SCs.
	HO	Great, thank you.

Meeting ended: 13:40

\*Addendum: There was insufficient time for the Partnership Panel to discuss the view expressed by Henry Oliver above. Please note that this statement does not represent the agreed views of all Panel members.