

Appendix 1

Northern Devon Futures – The Way Forward

What is Northern Devon Futures?

Northern Devon Futures is the partnership of organisations working together to improve the lives of those who live and work in Northern Devon and to plan for the future of the area.

Vision

The partnership will agree its vision, aims and objectives at its next meeting, following consultation. The draft vision proposed is set out below:

‘The Vision of the Partnership is that by 2050 Northern Devon is healthy, prosperous and sustainable, recognised for its aspiration, innovation, and ability to get things done. A place where all are able to succeed and no one is left behind.’

Rationale

The NDF Partnership is founded on the belief that through working together organisations can achieve more in support of agendas that the partners share. It recognises that in addressing different aspects of improving life in Northern Devon: its economy, the places that people live, its health, its education, action that can be taken in one aspect can impact (positively or negatively) on other areas. NDF looks to add value through providing a perspective that takes a holistic view, exploring and developing the areas where different actions can complement more than one agenda positively.

Working together in partnership can be time consuming. In a relatively small population such as Northern Devon, with organisations having relatively limited staffing capacities, it is often the case that the same individuals and organisations are represented in a number of different forums. The region cannot afford to waste time through duplication of effort through these meetings and so the NDF Partnership seeks to make the most efficient use of people’s time, so that together we have the capacity to achieve more.

It is clear that Northern Devon has had some particular challenges for some time and that these have been exacerbated by COVID. In terms of educational achievement, health outcomes, average salary, innovation and productivity in businesses, skill levels of the working age population, broadband infrastructure, transport infrastructure, and access to services, the region experiences some significant disadvantages in comparison with the rest of Devon and indeed in many areas with the rest of the country. Some of these are features of all areas of economic deprivation, others are particular challenges faced by rural and coastal areas like Northern Devon and require particular solutions.

Northern Devon also has some unique opportunities: a strong community ethos, enviable natural capital, some significant pockets of innovation and excellence, and a new attractiveness for people who recognise, following covid, that physical proximity to London

is not required to run successful, well networked businesses. Partners have however at the same time not historically succeeded in attracting sufficient investment from regional and national funders and investors to tackle the significant challenges of the region and capitalise on the opportunities. Other cities and regions have been far more successful in securing the investment necessary to make things happen. They have done so by preparing the long-term strategies for their areas, by developing business plans and project outlines for the elements that could be the blocks that pave the roadmaps to the future vision, and by leveraging the combined influence of their institutions, organisations and citizens. In short, they have developed a series of investible propositions and challenged Central and Local Government not to support them in the delivery of agendas that those bodies share with the locality.

Progress

The launch meeting of the Northern Devon Futures Partnership in December 2019 saw a wide range of partners from a variety of backgrounds and sectors come together to start the process of defining the future for Northern Devon. It recognised there is significant goodwill and a spirit of cooperation in Northern Devon which could be capitalised on. It agreed that to be successful for the people of Northern Devon, citizens, organisations and businesses would need three things from the partnership: Vision and inspiration; a strategic delivery capability and commitment from the combined anchor institutions of the region; and local community ownership.

It agreed draft Terms of Reference for the Partnership (attached and extended at appendix 1) and the potential to achieve more through a connected and long-term vision for the region spanning a number of inter-related domains. It mapped the landscape and explored the challenges and solutions. Officers from a number of organisations were tasked with establishing the groups that would set out proposals for a long-term strategy for the area and the creation of the action groups that would drive it. The onset of covid diverted many organisations towards adapting rapidly to a new way of working and forced them to re-prioritise. Cooperation continued throughout period but with more of a focus on the immediate issues of adapting to covid and supporting members of the community.

In May 2020, the NDF Partnership Board met again. It took stock of the economic situation at that stage and its impact on the region. Presentations were received on the different economic development plans being implemented across Devon and the wider LEP area, gave endorsement to the two Future Highstreets proposals submitted for Barnstaple and Bideford, and reviewed the community volunteering response that was supporting shielding and vulnerable citizens across the area.

Three areas of work which would be progressed collaboratively were agreed from that second meeting:

1. Continue to support actions around economic recovery
2. Establish the NDF Secretariat that will support partners in working together and adding value
3. Resolving issues of regional governance, in particular with the One Northern Devon group

1. Economic Recovery

The situation across the extended period of covid created far greater economic impacts than would have been the case if covid had been overcome in a shorter period of months. A small group of representatives from the District Councils, ND Healthcare Trust, Petroc and local partnership experts mapped out some additional activities that could be undertaken to support economic recovery, proposals that might be submitted, and projects that could be started. This led, inter alia, to:

- The success of the Barnstaple Future Highstreets proposal
- The approval of the only e-scooter initiative in a rural area by the Department for Transport
- A grant-funded project in hospitality focused around The Globe hotel in Torrington
- Barnstaple & District Chamber along with ND+ creating a Kickstart Agency to enable small firms to have access to Government-funded Kickstart employees, and the larger employers of the region creating significant numbers of Kickstart jobs for local young people
- The opening of NODE – the Innovation Centre for start-up businesses in Northern Devon
- A Devon-wide skills initiative, funded by the ESF, to support adults and young people to retrain to take jobs in the health and care sectors
- The Development of the relationship between the Centre of innovation excellence (CoTIE) and NODE
- Plans and proposals around environmental business initiatives

The designation of Levelling Up priority areas by central government, the anticipated arrival of a UK Prosperity Fund, the Government Skills for Jobs white paper, Government Green Economy Plan, the apparent speeding up of the national drive to become carbon neutral, and the range of initiatives announced in the March 2021 Budget all provide many opportunities for further investment in supporting Northern Devon's economic recovery. The level of economic decline in the last 12 months has been stark, making a poor situation much worse, and so major joined-up action around jobs, innovation, productivity and green growth, would seem an urgent priority.

2. The Northern Devon Futures Secretariat

To capitalise on the willingness to work collaboratively, to facilitate that collaboration and focus its activities, it was important to secure resource to staff a small NDF secretariat. With resources being tight, it is of paramount importance that this does not create an overhead on activity but adds value. A modest secretariat, with staffing from partners, has now been created (see below) which it is envisaged will be added to as opportunities require and as new areas of collaborative work take off.

Early in 2021, a small NDF group comprising Bill Blythe, Sarah-Jane Mackenzie-Shapland, Andrea Beacham, Rob Passmore, Chris Fuller and David Relph mapped the range of initiatives underway within Northern Devon according to the different areas of activity, with a view to informing NDF plans for what can be supported further in which areas. The map is available at appendix 4.

3. Resolve Governance of Regional Groups

There have been a number of separate groups collaborating in particular areas, but nothing that brought all areas together, created a long-term view, and secured Executive and Leader level engagement about the wider systems leadership in Northern Devon. The proposals for the way that regional groupings may inter-relate and the ways that NDF will support that joint working are shown in the diagram attached at appendix 3 and described in the section below. In the area of health and wellbeing, there have been frequent and extensive conversations between the district councils, Petroc and the Chair, Executive Group and Programme Manager of One Northern Devon. The upshot of these discussions has been that OND will focus its efforts on health and wellbeing, rather than on taking on a wider strategic agenda covering environment and economy and skills. OND will remain as an independent group and champion of health and wellbeing and not to join together with Northern Devon Futures as part of an integrated delivery partnership at the present time. Relationships are positive, the One Northern Devon Programme Manager will work with the NDF Secretariat as the conduit to the OND Board and no additional NDF group will be established. When the NDF Partnership agrees its strategic aims, objectives and operating plans, OND may reconsider its decision to remain as an independent group and renew closer engagement within NDF.

Also in the Health and Care space, the Devon Strategic Transformation Partnership, (shortly to become the Integrated Care System (ICS) and, in the next 12 months, taking on responsibility for the Clinical Commissioning Group) is establishing 'Local Care Partnerships' (LCPs) that are expected to take on responsibility for the local management and commissioning of clinical performance and to support the transition towards the greater integration and new ways of working to support good health associated with the ICS model. The LCP is finalising its governance and executive delivery arrangements, though it is expected that it will wish to engage with the broad cross-section of local strategic system leaders that constitute the NDF Partnership. Discussions with the LCP will continue to enable the LCP agenda to be well recognised and integrated within the NDF Partnership, and to inform NDF's longer term strategy.

In the Employment and Skills, Economy and Innovation areas, there have been four groups in existence, three for some time (the Innovation Board, NDPlus and the Employment and Skills Board) and a fourth group (the Covid Recovery Group) only over the last year. With the Innovation Board having seen its two major projects, the creation of NODE and the COTIE centre, come to fruition in the last few months, the Chair of the Innovation Board has stepped down and the Innovation Board gave its support for the proposals to re-constitute the agenda within NDF as set out in this document. There is an opportunity for these groups, all supported by the District Councils or Petroc, to come together to create a single more coherent action group in the economy, skills and innovation area, and to reduce the overhead associated with the support of the groups. Proposals in this respect are provided later in this document.

In the Education and Young People area, the NORDAB group of headteachers of the secondary schools in Northern Devon have been meeting for some time, along with Petroc, as a support network. More recently the group has come together to develop a regional strategy for Young People and put forward proposals for a local solution to the particular

challenges for young people in ND, that lead to some of the worst social mobility, attainment and disadvantage in the country. The group is keen to connect its work with the wider agenda of NDF and look to facilitate complementary action across education, community, health and opportunity. Proposals in respect to this are made later in the paper.

Contacting Northern Devon Futures

To get in touch with Northern Devon Futures and get involved, contact the Secretariat.

The contact for the NDF Secretariat is info@northerndevonfutures.org.uk .

The team services the meetings of the Strategic Board and Action Groups and progresses the Partnership's strategy and actions. Team members are employed by partner organisations and undertake the NDF Secretariat as part of their roles. Each member of the secretariat team takes the lead for a different aspect of NDF's work. A website will be developed in due course. The Secretariat Team is:

1. Bill Blythe – Head of Secretariat
2. Nicola Allen – Children and Young People
3. Dominic Dunbrook/Chris Fuller – Economy, Innovation and Skills
4. Andrea Beacham (OND) – Health and Wellbeing liaison
5. Sarah Jane Mackenzie Shapland – Place and Community
6. Louise Adam - New Funding Proposals Support
7. Janet Williams/Joint Climate Emergency Officer - Climate Emergency
8. Jon Walter - Governance Services

The Roadmap for Northern Devon Futures

Following the consultation period where comments and support will be sought from regional stakeholders, the following tasks will be undertaken.

The Partnership Strategic Board will next meet in September 2021. Its proposed membership and terms of reference are at appendix 1 as part of the proposed terms of reference for the wider NDF Partnership.

The draft NDF Strategy will be developed and presented to the Strategic Board

Four new Action Groups (listed below) have been created and will meet at least every 3 months. The Secretariat will invite members to attend meetings in October 2021:

- Economy, Innovation and Skills
- Children and Young People
- Climate Emergency
- Place and Community
- The Health and Wellbeing group has not yet been constituted, as One Northern Devon exists in this area and the Local Care Partnership is in the process of being formed. Close connections will be made with these groups and the NDF Strategic Board

Governance

The NDF Partnership comprises representatives of those groups listed in Appendix 1 together with contributors and groups identified as required members of the themed Action Groups, the membership of which will be added to as the Action Groups develop. The Terms of Reference are shown in Appendix 1.

The Consultation Draft of the NDF Strategy – 2022-2027

The Strategic Board will define the approach to producing the strategy, agree the consultation draft and seek feedback from stakeholders on it. It will identify aims, objectives and impact measures.

Actions Groups will be invited to develop action plans to deliver the agreed strategic objectives.

This process will be concluded within four months of the first meeting of the Strategic Board.

The Strategic Board will then adopt an annual operating plan comprising the actions from the Action Groups.

Further Iterations of the Strategy

Developing the Strategy 2026-2031

Extending the Strategy 2031-2041

Cementing lasting change: Strategy 2041-2051

Northern Devon Futures Partnership

Terms of reference

Northern Devon Futures Partnership members shall work together and individually in the spirit of trust, fairness and mutual co-operation. The work of the partnership is rooted in a spirit of cooperation and we affirm the value of working collaboratively to improve the lives of those who work and live in Northern Devon.

This is the constitution of the Northern Devon Futures Partnership. This constitution does not change, replace, substitute or amend in any way the statutory duties or other responsibilities of partners.

It does not change, replace, substitute or amend in any way partners organisations' own management or accountability frameworks, or prevent any individual partners' organisation from pursuing its own individual actions.

Roles and Authority

The main general role of all Members of the Partnership will be to take a Northern Devon-wide (the geographical area of North Devon and Torridge Districts) perspective and to develop consensus and common purpose in the best interests of the area as a whole.

Members will be recognised for their valuable contribution in bringing ideas, knowledge and expertise to the process.

Whilst recognising that decisions about the use of resources will still remain the preserve of individual partners, there is a need to establish consensus endorsement of strategic issues, while encouraging opportunities for better ways of working, joint working, delegation and joint or shared resources where appropriate. Members will need the appropriate authority to speak on behalf of their relevant organisations (proportionate to their role within the organisation).

Legal Status

The Northern Devon Futures Partnership is an informal partnership. It does not have legal status to enter into contracts and will act through partner organisations as appropriate.

Should there be a need for an Accountable Body for financial matters on behalf of the Northern Devon Futures Partnership this will be decided by the Members on a case by case basis.

Key Tasks

- Agree Strategy, Vision and an annual Operating Plan
- Create and provide direction to the NDF Action Groups, facilitating synergy between them to ensure a joined-up approach
- Monitor the implementation and impact of its *strategy* Vision and operating plan

- Identify and report strategic issues, which the Northern Devon Futures Partnership should be aware of
- Identify areas of joint interest, develop partnership responses to these issues, and where beneficial, deliver them with and through the partnership
- Identify funding opportunities and work collaboratively to secure these
- Provide strategic leadership on area wide issues, identified by partners and agreed by the Northern Devon Futures Partnership, where no other appropriate existing organisation or partnership can be identified
- Act to bring together intelligence, expertise and community and business support to identify priorities and develop solutions to maximise the town's economic opportunities and address barriers to regeneration
- Help to represent Northern Devon's interests to outside bodies, including Central Government, the HotSW LEP and the Joint Committee.
- Minimise bureaucracy and build upon existing structures - helping to demonstrate that we have reduced and not added to the 'bureaucratic burden'
- Focus on the needs of the whole of Northern Devon, with an inclusive concern for all citizens, especially the marginalised and disadvantaged
- Consider what is in the best interests for the common good of Northern Devon and weigh this along with the interests of individual organisations on the Strategic Board and their sector when making decisions.

The Northern Devon Futures Partnership Strategic Board

Membership

The Northern Devon Futures Partnership will consist of senior representatives from those organisations playing a lead role in the area.

- The composition of the Strategic Board will be as inclusive as practicable covering a full range of "key players" balancing this with a realistic maximum size of partnership necessary for it to be effective and strategic.
- The Strategic Board will need to secure the involvement of all the appropriate key players, including the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. This should allow engagement of residents, community, other public sector and business interests that cannot be represented directly on the Northern Devon Futures Strategic Board.
- Each member of the Strategic Board can name one alternate to attend in his / her place.
- Strategic Board members agree to champion and communicate the partnership arrangements of the Northern Devon Futures Partnership throughout their organisation, partnership and sector.
- If a member of the Northern Devon Futures Partnership Strategic Board changes to a different employer or loses his or her position, then their membership of the Northern Devon Futures Partnership will automatically cease with immediate effect.
- The aims and objectives of the Partnership will be progressed through a number of 'Action Groups' in themed areas, involving a wider range of stakeholders interested in progressing the agenda of the Action Group.

Members will be identified in relation to their leadership in a number of domains:

- Local Government and MPs

- Environmental/Climate Emergency
- Economy, Innovation and Skills
- Community and Place
- Health and Wellbeing
- Children and Young People
- Chairs of the NDF Action Groups

Chairing Arrangements

The Chair of the Northern Devon Futures Partnership shall be appointed by the members of the Strategic Board for a term of office of two-years, renewable for one term so the maximum length of time a chair may serve is 4 years.

The role of the Chair is to chair and manage the meetings of the Northern Devon Futures Partnership Strategic Board, creating an environment where all members are able to make a full contribution to the Northern Devon Futures Partnership business.

The NDF Secretariat will provide policy and secretariat support to the Northern Devon Futures Partnership Strategic Board and the NDF Action Groups.

Quorum

The Strategic Board requires a quorum of half the members, which must include representation from the two District Councils.

Meetings of the Strategic Board

The Strategic Board will meet six-monthly.

Meetings will not be held where there are insufficient members to achieve a quorum or insufficient business activity to warrant a meeting being convened. In exceptional circumstances a Partnership Board meeting may be convened at other times at the discretion of the Board Chair.

Documentation

Availability In keeping with the Strategic Board's schedule of meetings, materials for review need to be submitted to the Secretary by no later than noon, five Business Days prior to the day on which the materials are to be reviewed. Materials are to be sent in soft copy or with sufficient numbers of hard copy for each member of the Strategic Board.

The NDF Action Groups' Terms of Reference

The NDF Partnership Strategic Board will create themed Action Groups to further its strategic aims and objectives, dependent on the focus of its agenda. They are designed to support implementation of NDF operational plans, to seize opportunities as they arise, access resources and drive forward collaborative projects.

Action Groups will meet a minimum of quarterly but as frequently as required to deliver their agenda.

Foundation members will be invited to the first meetings of the Action Groups. Action Groups will appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair from amongst their membership. The Chair shall serve for a term of two years, renewable for a maximum of one term, (4 years in total).

The Group may co-opt members as approved by the Chair.

The Chairs of the Action Groups will be members of the NDF Partnership Strategic Board; the Vice Chair shall be their alternate.

Action Groups will provide reports on their activities to the NDF Strategic Board every six-months.

The NDF Secretariat will support the meetings of the Action Groups.

Annex Two: Proposed Membership of the NDF Partnership Strategic Board August 2021 and proposed foundation members of the NDF Action Groups

Proposed members of the NDF Partnership Strategic Board are listed below. Proposed 'foundation members' to be invited to form the NDF Action Groups are listed, by Action Group, in the section that follows.

Proposed Membership of the NDF Partnership Strategic Board

Geoffrey Cox, MP Torridge and West Devon
Selaine Saxby MP North Devon
Councillor Rufus Gilbert, Devon County Council
Councillor David Worden – Leader, North Devon Council
Councillor Ken James, Leader, Torridge District Council
Alison Hernandez, Devon & Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner

Ken Miles, CEO, North Devon Council
Steve Hearse, CEO, Torridge District Council
Phil Norrey, CEO, Devon County Council

Tim Jones – Chair of North Devon Biosphere Foundation

Mike Matthews, MD Lineal Software & Chair of the ND Employment and Skills Board
Alan Dykes, TDK Lambda – Chair, North Devon+
Sean Mackney – Principal and CEO, Petroc College
David Ralph – CEO Heart of the SW LEP
Stuart Elford, CEO – Devon and Plymouth Chamber
Stuart Brocklehurst – CEO, Applegate & Chair of Great-SW Innovation Board/HoTSW LEP Director

Toby Davies – Devon and Cornwall Police
Paul Britton – Homes England

Suzanne Tracey – Northern Devon Healthcare Trust/Royal Devon & Exeter Trust
John Womersley – Chair One Northern Devon (proxy group for Health and Wellbeing pro-tem)

Andy Cotton – CEO, Tarka Learning Partnership Multi Academy Trust

Chairs of the NDF Action Groups
Economy, Innovation and Skills

Health and Wellbeing (One Northern Devon Board)

Climate Emergency

Place and Community

Children and Young People

Proposed 'foundation members' of NDF Action Groups

Strategic Board members and foundation members will be invited to constitute the Action Groups with the support of the NDF Secretariat and invite other stakeholders as appropriate to their agendas.

Climate Emergency

Helen Dobby – Assistant Director, Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, Environment Agency SW

James Szymankiewicz – Plastic Free ND / CANDo

Steve Mulberry – Area Of Natural Beauty Partnership

Economy, Innovation and Skills

Lee Tozer - Department for Work and Pensions

Paul Mullen – ND Manufacturer Association

Tim Puttick, TDK Lambda & Director SWIOT (as anchor employer)

David Barker - North Devon Marketing Board

Julian Dymond – Town Square

Community and Place

Toby Davies – Devon and Cornwall Police

Paul Britton – Homes England

Sarah Bryan or Dan James – Exmoor National Park

Martyn Gimber – North Devon Homes

TBC - Westcountry Housing

TBC – ND VS/TTVS

Keri Denton - One Public Estate group representative

TBC - Safer Devon

Health and Wellbeing

John Womersley – Chair One Northern Devon (proxy group for Health and Wellbeing pro-tem)

Jane Milligan - CEO Devon Integrated Care System

Tim Golby, DCC and Local Care Partnership – North

Darryn Allcorn - CCG/ICS Chief Nurse

Children and Young People

Andy Cotton – CEO, Tarka Learning Partnership Multi Academy Trust

TBC NORDAB Secondary Heads representative

TBC - Primary schools representative

Annex Three: Approximate Area Covered by the Northern Devon Futures Partnership



The Northern Devon Futures Partnership



* The Devon Integrated Care System has not yet created its Local Care Partnership Integrated Delivery Group. NDF will engage closely with the LCP when it is constituted to ensure synergy with the wider NDF agenda

**The One Northern Devon group focuses on Health and Wellbeing in Northern Devon. It has decided to remain independent of NDF until the Strategic Board defines its strategy, when it may become part of the NDF regional delivery partnership.

***Partners retain statutory accountability to their individual regulators

Appendix Five: Example of mapping current and possible investible project ideas

The attached link connects to an example 'miro' board, produced mid-way through the Covid period, which maps the way Northern Devon was responding to supporting the post-covid recovery.

It shows a range of project ideas, some current, some planned, some speculative for action which could be taken in Northern Devon.

It is included for illustration of the way NDF might collaborate to map further ideas and then consider them for inclusion in its operational plans pursued through its Action Groups.

https://miro.com/app/board/o9J_kpu03IQ=/