

**6Cs Strategic GI Project Board  
Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> June 2009  
East Midlands Regional Assembly Offices  
Nottingham Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0UL**

**Notes and Action Points**

**Present:**

**Board members**

AH - Alison Hepworth (chair)	EMRA
DBo – David Bole (vice-chair)	Forestry Commission
SJ - Sharon Jefferies (secretariat)	6Cs GI Development Coordinator
DS - Dave Slinger	Derby City Council
DL - David Lepper	Natural England
LE - Lesley Eddleston	Leicestershire County Council
TP – Tim Pickering	Environment Agency
DK – Demi Korontzi	Environment Agency
RR – Ruth Rolls	GreenSpace East Midlands
EG – Ed Green	East Midlands Environment Link (EMEL)
RC – Richard Crosthwaite	EMDA
BJ – Barry Joyce	Derbyshire County Council
EO – Elizabeth Oxborough	Leicester City Council
HS – Heather Stokes	Nottinghamshire County Council

**Wider reference group**

MP – Martin Potts	GOEM
MH – Malcolm Hackett	Greenwood Community Forest
FC – Fiona Clarke	Groundwork East Midlands
SE – Simon Evans	National Forest

**6Cs Growth Point team**

SB – Sarah Banks	6Cs Derby HMA Co-ordinator
EGr – Emma Grady	6Cs Leicester & Leicestershire HMA Co-ordinator (departed 10.45am)
JB – John Bloxsom	6Cs Programme Manager
NR – Nick Rimes	Accountant for 6Cs Accountable Body, Leicester City Council

Apologies were received from: Andy Jackson (Stepping Stones Project), Paul Tame (NFU), Neil Horsley (Trent River Park), James Dymond (Nottingham City Council), Matt Gregory (Greater Notts HMA), Helen Woolley (CLA), Charlotte Gault (EMBP).

**Item 1. Welcome, introductions and apologies.**

AH welcomed RR, MP, EO, DK and HS to their first 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board meeting.

**Item 2. Guest presentation**

John Lockhart and Ian Dudley from Lockhart Garrett Associates presented to the Board “Green Infrastructure: What do we do? Where do we start?” The presentation aimed to explore how to bridge the gap between the adoption of a sub-regional strategic GI Strategy and delivery on the ground. The recommendations presented by Lockhart Garratt are as follows

*Where to start*

- Make the Strategy a live document/tool
- Confirm delivery partnership
- Establish robust funding agreements

*What to do*

- Embed GI Strategy in local policy
- Prepare GI specific Supplementary Planning Documents and Area Action Plans
- Engage local planning authorities
- Give GI/Strategy a public identity
- Positively engage with developers

A discussion followed the presentation. AH informed the Board that in relation to providing a live document/tool the regional GI Steering Group plan to roll out the GI and Environmental Character Suite, piloted in Northamptonshire, to the rest of the Region, with the 6Cs possibly being the next area for this to be done. SE asked who are the ‘key people’ to engage with developers? John Lockhart responded by saying positive outcomes had been achieved through bringing together a group of environmental stakeholders at an early stage in the masterplanning process. Organisations, such as those represented on this Board, need to empower and resource people to do this work. A single point of contact for developers and a co-ordinated approach was also key. John Lockhart also advised the Board to allow room for modification of the final adopted GI Network, for example aspirations of a strategic corridor could still be achieved, and even enhanced, even if its exact location was moved or modified.

DBo asked the consultants whether they saw this GI Strategy approach as facilitating development? John Lockhart responded that from experience developers see GI as a mechanism for them to deliver environmental gains. It is also a mechanism for allowing them to ‘look beyond the red line’ and deliver wider benefits. It is more difficult to deliver if the developer is tied to mitigation measures within the ‘red line’ of a development site.

EG asked about what role developers have played in the past to resource this process and the ‘key people’ described above. John Lockhart explained developers had provided meeting venues and the masterplanning team and local planning authorities had contributed officer time. EG and DBo suggested that this is something that the GI Board should consider further.

FC commented that she had not heard reference to how third sector organisations and communities on the receiving end of this development had been engaged and noted that the process seems very ‘top heavy’. John Lockhart confirmed that this had been dealt with by a parallel process of consultation that fed in to the masterplanning work.

Action	Detail	Who	When
6.1	<b>6Cs Strategic GI Board to further consider the potential of partnership working with developers to resource early engagement with key environmental partners during the masterplanning process.</b>		

**Item 3. Actions from last meeting 11<sup>th</sup> February 2009**

Due to the cancellation of the April 09 Board meeting minutes were approved virtually and posted on the 6Cs GI website 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009. The Actions were reviewed.

With regard to Action 4.2 MP informed the Board that this issue had now gone to the Public Service Agreement (PSA) Board and DEFRA and is being dealt with and DEFRA are looking at ways to address this issue. DBo also raised this at a National PSA28 meeting, where data sharing was also listed as number 1 issue/barrier in other regions. GOEM will continue to take the lead on this.

Action	Detail	Who	When
4.2	<b>Continuation of Action 4.2. GOEM liaising with DEFRA on issues associated with sharing data. MP/AB to provide progress updates to SGI Board as appropriate</b>	<b>AB MP</b>	Updates to be provided as appropriate

The following Actions are ongoing

Action	Detail	Who	When
2.12	<b>Compile schedule of Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) coming forward across the 6Cs Growth Point.</b>	<b>SJ MG SB EGr</b>	Ongoing as info is confirmed
5.13	<b>SJ to continue to develop the 6CsGI Comms Plan in line with the 6Cs GI Strategy</b>	<b>SJ</b>	<b>Feb-Sept 09</b>
5.14	<b>All Board members to continue to send SJ suggestions for 6Cs GI straplines and mission statements.</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Up to end of Jul 09</b>

#### **Item 4. Updates from the 6Cs Programme Management Board**

AH circulated two letters

- A copy of a letter AH received from Alistair Reid, Leicester City Council, on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2009.
- A copy of a DRAFT response to the above letter

The letter from Alistair Reid was sent further to the 6Cs Programme Management Board (PMB) held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 and contains the following “request that at least one third of the Strategic Green Infrastructure budget for 2009-10 is ring fenced and held back for allocation to Leicester and Leicestershire at a later date”. AH informed the Board that this was raised at the 6Cs PMB on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 by Andrew Smith, Leicester City Council. AH had no prior knowledge of this request or that it would be raised at this meeting and final minutes from this PMB meeting had not been circulated to date.

AH presented the Board with a draft response that had been compiled with assistance from DBo and SJ. AH outlined that this draft response stated that she and the SGI Board would not approve ‘holding back’ one third of funds solely for Leicester and Leicestershire HMA based projects. The SGI Board were taking a strategic view of GI delivery across the Growth Point and would look to fund and deliver a spread of projects, not a three way split of funds. The SGI Board had also developed a process where the selection of projects is transparent and fair and decisions are open. This process and the timeline involved had been communicated to partners and had been in the public domain, on the 6Cs website, since 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009. To delay this process further would result in a high degree of reputation risk and to treat

the Leicester & Leicestershire HMA in a different way to the Derby and Greater Notts HMA would be unfair.<sup>1</sup>

All those present at the Board meeting unanimously agreed with and supported this response. Board members suggested minor amendments be made to the response in light of decisions signed off at this current SGI Board meeting.

MP added that GOEM supports this fair, open and transparent process and would be “very unhappy” to see this process change. Charlotte Gault who was unable to attend the meeting provided SJ with the following comment with regards to holding back a third of funds for Leicester and Leicestershire “this has (or could) limited our ability to act strategically – which is our purpose. We should not be guaranteeing set amounts to each HMA, just seeking to be reasonably even-handed geographically, while delivering the best strategic GI projects that come forward.”

Action	Detail	Who	When
6.2	AH to finalise and send a response to the letter received from Alistair Reid.	AH	ASAP

#### **Item 5. 6Cs Strategic GI Project Appraisal Panel feedback**

An Appraisal Panel Feedback paper prepared by SJ, was presented to the Board. SJ, DBo and NR outlined the appraisal panel process and those involved.

Each project was appraised using the Appraisal Panel Score Sheet approved by the Board on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2009 and provided to applicants as part of the suite of application documents. After any declaration of interests was announced each panel member individually assessed each project and assigned scores, an average was then derived to determine the final score.

A first filter of projects was based on the following criteria

- Project Risk and Delivery Timescale
- Strategic nature
- Long term sustainable management and maintenance
- Financial and administrative soundness

In order to proceed to the next appraisal stage each project had to satisfy the panel that the project met all of the above requirements.

The second stage of assessment, where a score was derived, was based up on the criteria developed by the GI Board. A summary of the criteria and associated scores is provided below

- Strengthened Connectivity of the Sub-regional GI network – 15 marks
- Serving the needs of Communities for GI – 15 marks
- Sustaining Distinctive GI Assets – 8 marks
- Adding value through partnership working – 8 marks
- Delivering Multiple Benefits – 15 marks

<sup>1</sup> \* Post the SGI Project Board meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2009 further discussion took place and in response AH made further revisions to the reply sent to Alistair Reid. This reply was sent 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009.

- Taking forward sustainable development objectives – 15 marks
- Working at the “Landscape Scale” – 15 marks
- Delivering Regional Priorities – 8 marks

**Chair**

David Bole Forestry Commission (present 5<sup>th</sup> June 09 only)

**Appraisal Panel**

Sharon Jefferies 6Cs GI Development Co-ordinator (acting Chair 4<sup>th</sup> June 09)  
 Tim Pickering Environment Agency  
 Lesley Eddleston Leicestershire County Council  
 Fiona Clarke Groundwork East Midlands  
 Alex Bowness Government Office East Midlands  
 Ed Green East Midlands Environment Link (present 4<sup>th</sup> June 09 only)  
 Charlotte Gault East Midlands Biodiversity Partnership (present 5<sup>th</sup> June 09 only)

**Panel Advisor**

Nick Rimes Leicester City Council, financial representative for 6Cs Partnership accountable body

Alison Hepworth East Midlands Regional Assembly

**Observer**

John Bloxsom 6Cs Programme Manager

A brief description of each project and the panel recommendations were presented. The Appraisal Panel presented 5 projects for approval totalling £1,566,015

- Erewash Valley Trail – 86%, £453,185
- National Forest Cycling Centre – 70%, £300,000
- Derwent Valley Greenway – 71%, £131,000
- Derby City Greenway – 88%, £318,000
- Willington's Wetlands – 92%, £363,830

The Board supported the recommendations of the Panel and AH ratified this decision.

SJ outlined that approval of the 5 projects results in £774,275 capital funds remaining from the 08/09 and 09/10 allocation, with confirmation of a further allocation £1,170,145 for 10/11 expected December 2009, a total of £1,944,420 New Growth Point capital funding remains unallocated for Strategic GI.

*Appraisal Panel wash-up meeting*

DBo informed the Board that there had been some basic issues with some of the bids. This included errors in financial information and that a number of projects were considered by the panel to not be of a sufficiently strategic nature and thus did not make it to the second stage of appraisal. DBo commended the Derbyshire Wildlife Trusts application as being a particularly good example. There were also improvements to be made to both the application form and the appraisal process and this would be dealt with at a later ‘wash-up’ meeting. It was also agreed that SJ would work more closely with partners to develop their applications during later bidding rounds and therefore would not form part of the appraisal panel in the future.

*Applicant notification of funding decisions*

After discussion it was agreed that SJ would verbally notify successful applicants as soon as possible. Those unsuccessful applicants would be notified in writing where a ‘high-level’ reason would be provided, but further feedback could be obtained by contacting the GI Development Co-ordinator.

*Future bidding rounds*

SJ presented the Board with two scenarios for future bidding rounds.

- Should the Board proceed with a second round to allocate the £774,275 capital funds remaining from 08/09 and 09/20 allocation in September 2009, followed by a third round to allocate £1,170,145 capital funds early 2010.
- Should the Board proceed with a second and final round in early 2010 to allocate the total £1,944,420 capital funds remaining once 10/11 allocation has been confirmed.

Funding for the final Programme year, 2010/11, will be confirmed by 6Cs PMB subject to HCA announcement in December 2009.

NR advised the Board to proceed with a single final round with the remaining funds from the first round plus 10/11 allocation. The Board agreed to proceed on this basis and work to the following timeline

**Early Sept 09** – second and final round of project applications invited, £1,944,420 capital funds available

**End Nov 09** – Deadline for applications

**First two weeks Jan 2010** – Appraisal Panel convenes

It was agreed that this time line would aid applicants in terms of certainty of funding before the end of the financial year that would strengthen their position in terms of bidding for other match funding for the financial year beginning April 2010. In addition the 10/11 allocation will be confirmed by the time the panel convenes.

JB stated that funding is confirmed pending the GI Strategy being finalised and the budget will be considered at the PMB in October 2009. NR asked JB “Is the 10% 3<sup>rd</sup> year allocation for SGI likely to be reduced?” JB answered “No”.

*Financial arrangements regarding grant offers, contracts, payment and monitoring*

NR informed the Board that Leicester City Council has a department called Partnership Executive Team (Commissioning Support) which deals with contract management of projects. The Team Leader, Julie Morley, has offered to handle the contract management of the SGI projects and handle the following work on behalf of the SGI Board; enter into appropriate contracts following decisions made by the appraisal panel; getting DPCs signed; issuing contracts and liaising with Legal; receiving and making payments; monitoring and preparing and sending out requests for monitoring returns. This would be done for a fixed fee of £4000pa based on a total of no more than 15 contracts.

SJ expressed her preference for this arrangement so that all SGI projects would be dealt with by a single organisation and would come under Leicester City Council capitalisation policy and other financial procedures, as indicated in the Guidance for Applicants provided for the first bidding round. JB notified the Board that contracts had already been issued to the three HMA Co-ordinators containing a clause outlining that they would be responsible for management of SGI contracts within their respective HMA. SJ pointed out that these contracts had not been signed yet and the arrangement outlined by NR is actually the arrangement for SGI projects that was agreed at a meeting in July 2008 with the previous 6Cs Programme Manager, Guy Wisbey. SB as Derby HMA Co-ordinator was happy with this arrangement. DBo emphasised the need for a formal agreement to be drawn up with Julie Morley’s team in respect to this arrangement so that all necessary work is covered.

All Board members agreed that it was preferable for all SGI projects to be dealt with by a single organisation and it was appropriate that this was the 6Cs Growth Point’s accountable body. SJ, NR and AH would liaise with Julie Morley to discuss specifics

and draw up a specification for this work. JB to work with the HMA Co-ordinators to amend the HMA contracts as necessary.

Action	Detail	Who	When
6.3	<b>SJ to liaise with appraisal panel members and organise a 'wash-up' meeting ready to report to the next SGI Board on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2009.</b>	<b>SJ</b>	<b>July 09</b>
6.4	<b>SJ to assist partners in developing their applications for future bidding rounds for NGP funds</b>	<b>SJ</b>	<b>Sept-Nov 09</b>
6.5	<b>SJ to notify applicants of the outcome of the Appraisal Panel and final decisions made at the SGI Board meeting.</b>	<b>SJ</b>	<b>ASAP</b>
6.6	<b>SJ, NR and AH to liaise with Julie Morley regarding financial management arrangements for SGI projects and draw up a specification for the work. Once complete pass to JB.</b>	<b>SJ NR AH</b>	<b>June 09</b>
6.7	<b>JB to work with the HMA Co-ordinators to amend the HMA contracts as necessary.</b>	<b>JB</b>	

#### Item 6. 6Cs GI Strategy update

SJ presented a paper providing an update on 6Cs GI Strategy progress. The Stage 1 report was complete and with the Steering Group for final sign-off. SJ hoped to make this final DRAFT available on the 6Cs GI website by the end of June 2009. The Steering Group approved a decision to extend the scope of work for Stage 2 to include the three cities plus all sub-regional centres to align the Strategy with the finalised East Midlands Regional Plan. Stage 2 work was underway with good progress being made on the Derby HMA Network Mapping. There had been delays due to data issues during Stage 2 but CBA still expected to complete the final Strategy and Action Plan by the original deadline for end August 2009.

The Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping pilot study for the 6Cs is complete and currently awaiting sign-off from Natural England. Once sign-off is received SJ will circulate and has requested permission from Natural England to make the study available on the 6Cs GI website.

SJ made the following recommendations to the Board relating to further stakeholder engagement during Strategy development

- During Stage 2 a more informal but targeted approach is undertaken where a group of key contacts from the relevant HMA act as 'special consultees' or 'critical friends'. They will be provided with a DRAFT version of the relevant GI Network and accompanying text before being invited to a discussion session with the Co-ordinator and CBA where their comments and feedback can be directly recorded.
- A second Stakeholder event is planned for end-Sept 2009 where the final findings of the Strategy are presented to Partners, followed by a 'window' for wider consultation. The following timetable is proposed
  - End of Aug 09** – CBA to have final draft of completed 6Cs GI Strategy and Action Plan complete.
  - End Sept 09** – Stakeholder engagement event, where final findings of the Strategy are presented to partners.
  - End Sept to mid Nov 09** – window for wider consultation

**Mid Nov to end Dec 09** – necessary changes made to the Strategy and Action Plan.

**Jan to Feb 2010** – Strategy launch event and partners formally endorse the completed strategy

SJ reminded the Board that a second stakeholder engagement event would incur an additional cost as it was not included in the original brief that the consultants CBA tendered against. If the Board agree that there is a need for the second Stakeholder event as outline above, that we ask CBA to provide us with a quote for this extra event plus a quote for the additional time incurred to receive consultation responses, review these and then make the necessary changes to the document post the wider consultation.

The Board agreed the proposals as outlined by SJ.

SE proposed that this time line would allow the Board to consider any 'key strategic issues' that may arise from the wider consultation at the Board meeting in December 2009. FC asked if the Strategy would be made available in its draft format to those developing project applications for the second round of NGP SGI funding. SJ and AH assured the Board that this would be the case, SJ added that as soon as each section has reached final DRAFT stage it will be made available to partners with the caveat that it is still subject to review as the rest of the strategy progresses and during public consultation, as was always the original intention.

Action	Detail	Who	When
6.8	<b>SJ to make 6Cs GI Strategy Stage 1 report and Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping report available on 6Cs GI website once final sign-off is received and notify Board members of the posting</b>	<b>SJ</b>	<b>End of June 09</b>
6.9	<b>All Board members to ensure that they use their networks and contacts to inform people when the above material is available on the 6Cs GI website</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Once 6.8 is complete</b>
6.10	<b>SJ to liaise with AH and CBA to make necessary arrangements for future stakeholder engagement and provide the Board with an update at the next meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> Aug 09.</b>	<b>SJ</b>	<b>Jun-Sept 09</b>

### **Item 7. Updates from the Housing Market Area Boards**

SB informed the Board that Derby HMA is currently focused on reviewing it's Programme of Development (PoD).

EG tabled a paper updating the Board on the Leicester and Leicestershire (L&L) Multi Area Agreement and sub-regional governance arrangements. The L&L HMA received £5.2m capital and £335k revenue in 2008/09. £3.6m capital and £325k revenue was spent within 08/09, the remaining allocation has all been committed. 2009-11 funding has been held back pending the implementation of the new (interim) strategic commissioning framework.

### **Item 8. Chair update**

AH gave a brief update of the work of EMRA's GI Steering Group. The group met on 9 June. This group aims to take forward the strategic approach to GI at the regional level through the vagaries of the SNR process (Sub-national Review). As well as an update around the table from partners about sub regional and local GI delivery

around the region, the group heard updates from National level, including the launch of the new Natural England GI Guidance. Regional updates included work on Biodiversity Mapping, Landscape Character Assessment and access and discussions were held around support for the EMGIN (East Midlands Green Infrastructure Network), including the website and the proposed 2nd Annual User Conference to be held at EXPO 2009 at the Walker Stadium, Leicester on 8 October. One of the key areas this regional steering group wants to concentrate on is adding value to those areas of the region not benefiting from the Growth Areas/ Points funding in terms of GI delivery/ strategies/ awareness etc. The group are working on producing a statement of the current regional situation as regards GI, to be used as the basis for more awareness raising seminars around the region – particularly focussing on the gaps in GI funding/ delivery/ awareness. Lincolnshire/ Rutland has been identified for a focussed event on GI to a target audience. Work was also discussed on an audit of GI at the regional level – a “state of GI development in the East Midlands Region”.

#### **Item 9. GI Co-ordinator update**

SJ tabled a paper providing Board members with an up to date list of Board members, wider reference group membership and the 6Cs Growth Point Team, plus individuals on the list to receive finalised Board minutes. SJ asked Board members to inform her if any additional people should be added to the circulation list for Board minutes.

SJ informed the Board that JB has accepted the RIEP funded post of Strategic Director Housing and Planning covering Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. AH offered her congratulations.

SJ in her paper also provided an update on Member engagement issues and work on a 6Cs Highways Design Guide.

Action	Detail	Who	When
6.11	<b>Board members to inform SJ of any additional people to be added to the circulation list for SGI Board minutes.</b>	All	ongoing

#### **Item 10. GI Successes and Achievements from across the 6Cs Growth Point**

Ran out of time for this item, SJ requested that Board members provide her with this information prior to the next Board meeting and she will compile into a paper.

Action	Detail	Who	When
6.12	<b>All Board members to provide SJ with info on GI successes and achievements from across the 6Cs Growth Point prior to the next Board meeting</b>	SJ	Before 6 <sup>th</sup> Aug 09

**Item 11. Any other business**

Board members requested that SJ explore the possibility of developing a members section on the 6Cs GI website where Board papers can be posted and only accessed only by Board members and members of the wider reference group.

Action	Detail	Who	When
6.13	<b>SJ to explore the possibility of developing a Board members section of the 6Cs GI website</b>	<b>SJ</b>	<b>Report back to Board 13<sup>th</sup> Aug 09</b>

**Venue for next meeting(s)**

**All meetings 10am to 1pm unless otherwise stated**

- Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> August 09. Venue: EMRA, Melton Mowbray
- Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 09. Venue: Derby City Partnership, Derby  
**\*Please note date change below\***
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 09. Venue: County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire  
**\*Please note date change below\***
- Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Venue: tbc (any offers?)