

Greater South East Net Zero Hub (GSENZH) Board Meeting - 17 October 2023

Conducted via online conference.

Attendees

<p>Ben Burfoot - (Reading Borough Council) Berkshire LEP (Berks LEP)</p> <p>Nick Bell - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)</p> <p>Sheryl French – Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)</p> <p>Gerry Glover – CPCA Finance Manager for Greater South East Net Zero Hub</p> <p>Natasha Marshall – CPCA Finance Officer for Greater South East Net Zero Hub</p> <p>Richard Hall - Consultant for CPCA / Greater South East Net Zero Hub, Sustainable Warmth, and Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 Programmes</p> <p>Swapna Uddin - Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)</p> <p>Simon Wyke - Greater London Authority</p>	<p>Genevieve Dady - Greater South East Net Zero Hub (GSENZH) – Supply Chain Engagement Officer</p> <p>Graeme Heron – Greater South East Net Zero Hub – Energy Efficiency Programme Lead</p> <p>Maxine Narburgh - Greater South East Net Zero Hub – Regional Hub Manager - Chairing</p> <p>Erica Sutton - Greater South East Net Zero Hub – Hub Support Coordinator</p> <p>Helen Pollock - Hertfordshire LEP</p> <p>Nicolette Jeffreys – New Anglia LEP (NALEP)</p> <p>Mark Saunders – Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)</p> <p>Sally Andreou - Oxfordshire LEP</p> <p>Jo Simmons - South East LEP (SELEP)</p> <p>Arthur Le Geyt - South East Midlands LEP (SEMLEP)</p>
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Minutes

1. Apologies, Introductions

- The meeting was chaired by Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH.
- Apologies were given by:
 - Ian Barham, Buckinghamshire LEP
 - Robert Emery, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
 - Marsha Robert, Coast to Capital LEP
 - Chris Burchell, EnterpriseM3 LEP
 - Marida Cable-Lewis, EnterpriseM3 LEP
 - Lisa Roberts, New Anglia LEP
 - Sarah Gilbert, Oxfordshire County Council.
- The meeting welcomed Mark Saunders, Oxfordshire County Council, who kindly joined the meeting to deputise for Sarah Gilbert.

2. Minutes, Actions and Matters Arising

2.1 Minutes

- The minutes of the previous GSENZH Board meeting 05.09.23 were reviewed and agreed as a true account.

BOARD DECISION: The minutes of the previous GSENZH Board meeting 05.09.23 are agreed as a true account.

ACTION 1. Board member volunteer (to be confirmed) is to sign off the minutes of the GSENZH Board meeting 05.09.23 as agreed.

2.2 Actions

- The actions from the previous Board meeting 05.09.23 were confirmed as complete or covered within the agenda. In addition, the following updates were highlighted:
- **Local Area Energy Planning Cross-Hub Working Group** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that a budget of £150k has been allocated by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) for a coordinated programme of work on local area energy planning. The Terms of Reference for the group are to be developed. On behalf of the Working Group, the South West Net Zero Hub has led on a bid with Advanced Infrastructure Limited as the technology provider into the Innovate UK Pathfinder Phase 2 grant fund for a £4-5 million project with a 20-month timeline. Although Advanced Infrastructure Limited is involved, the project will be technology agnostic and will test broader elements of the programme. Maxine Narburgh asked the GSENZH Board to get in contact if they had any questions or wanted further information.

ACTION 2. Board members to contact Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH if they have questions or need further information about the Local Area Energy Planning Cross-Hub Working Group Innovate UK Pathfinder Phase 2 bid.

- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution Deal** - Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council proposed that Nick Bell, CPCA was best placed to provide an update on the prospective devolution deal. Nick Bell confirmed that the Combined Authority was working with partner councils to consider entering a Level 2 devolution deal, to include skills and transport, to take advantage of the wider devolution of DESNZ funding. Groups have been set up to develop proposals. An Autumn Statement is expected 22.11.23 which will explain how devolution deals will happen, with a menu of items. It is yet unknown what the menu will comprise. It is yet unclear what the full implications of devolution of funding might be.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council observed that regarding retrofit, the West Midlands and Manchester devolution deals are nearly signed and will be taken through the local Net Zero Hubs. Sheryl asked what this would be like for other local authorities that are not mayoral authorities. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH observed that the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership got a retrofit delivery scheme through and that it would be interesting to see how it progresses.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP asked what the implications were of the devolution of DESNZ funding on the Net Zero Hubs. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that the devolution deals would have no impact. Nick Bell, CPCA confirmed that there would be no impact on the GSENZH governance, but that devolution would give more power and control about how funding is utilised.
- **Action Log** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH reminded GSENZH Board members that an updated action log was provided with the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23, which could be referred to for further information on the status of all actions. Maxine noted that Action 11, assigned to Simon Wyke, Greater London Authority, which concerned the identification of colleagues to join the Regional Retrofit Training Network Steering Group, was complete and should be marked as closed.

ACTION 3. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH to close off Action 11 from GSENGH Board meeting 05.09.23, for Simon Wyke, Greater London Authority, to identify colleagues to join the Regional Retrofit Training Network Steering Group.

2.3 Matters Arising

- There were no matters arising brought to the attention of the GSENGH Board at the 17.10.23 meeting.

3. Finance

- The meeting welcomed Gerry Glover, newly appointed CPCA Finance Manager for Greater South East Net Zero Hub, who has been in post since end September 2023, and Natasha Marshall, CPCA Finance Officer for GSENGH.
- A report on the GSENGH financial position to 30 September 2023 was presented at the meeting by Gerry Glover, CPCA. This shows the budget and spend to date. Gerry advised that the figures for the report are still being worked on due to issues with the Agresso financial management system. Budgets are not 100% in the correct place against cost centres. However, going forward the intention is to produce a monthly budget report with a narrative and an appendix showing the figures. The following points were highlighted:
- **Home Upgrade Grant Phase 1 (HUG1)** - The key item of interest in the report is the delay to the HUG1 repayment of £1.7 million, which is pending the completion of reconciliation. GSENGH is awaiting formal agreement from DESNZ to this delay.
- **Community Energy Fund** – An MOU from DESNZ is awaited. A £1 million budget for the financial year 2023-24 is awaited. Budgets will be entered once final figures are available.
- **Actuals** - The August and September 2023 salary recharges are to be posted in October 2023 due to the need to assemble the figures.
- **Sustainable Warmth (HUG1 and Local Authority Delivery Phase 3 (LAD3))** – The reconciliation is in progress.
- **Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2)** – The budget is now £61.5 million following the second change request made to DESNZ. An upfront payment of £14 million was made of which £2 million was an overpayment. DESNZ has asked that this overpayment amount be taken out of batch requests, rather than a repayment being made. Capability and Capacity payments are in progress to relevant local authorities.
- GSENGH Board members had the following questions and comments about the finance update:
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council asked whether the £7 million figure for total spend is behind that forecast. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH advised that HUG2 is behind forecast. However, a third batch has already been submitted. There is a delay due to the time it takes for installers to go through the administrative process to invoicing. A 60-day lead time is expected for this.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council queried whether the issue experienced during Sustainable Warmth, of suppliers holding off from invoicing regularly and only doing it quarterly, was being repeated for HUG2. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH confirmed that this had been an issue for Sustainable Warmth and that HUG1 and LAD3 invoices were still awaited from E.ON. However, for HUG2, the contractual arrangement was that delivery partners were expected to invoice within 30 days and that a KPI has been included so further work would be held back from them until they submitted the Application for Payment and invoices. Gerry Glover, CPCA advised that in addition, a payment schedule was being produced for contractors, which shows when they are required to invoice and which they are required to adhere to. If they miss it, they must wait for the next cycle.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP asked whether it would be possible to separate HUG2 from the rest of the financial reporting as it could swamp everything else.

- Gerry Glover, CPCA advised that for November 2023, a formal budget report would be produced, which would include a narrative and provide better information to the GSENZH Board. In the meantime, a copy of the financial report to 30 September 2023 presented to the GSENZH Board will be circulated to Board members. This report is not perfect but will provide a good indication of the position. Gerry further advised that upgrades to the Agresso system will enable a 'by project' or 'by project manager' report download, so that discussion of forecasts can be undertaken. There will be continual improvement to the reporting until it is perfect.

ACTION 4. Gerry Glover, CPCA to circulate to the GSENZH Board a copy of the report on the GSENZH financial position to 30 September 2023.

4. Greater South East Net Zero Hub Board Governance

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH introduced this agenda item. A paper on the GSENZH governance transition process, including the requirement for an updated GSENZH Board Terms of Reference (ToR) was provided to GSENZH Board members in advance of the meeting with the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23, pages 21-24.
- The governance transition has been prompted by the new GSENZH MOU from DESNZ and the transition to local authorities of the responsibilities of Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- An updated ToR was circulated to the GSENZH Board for review in March 2023 and the latest ToR Version 2.0, October 2023, was circulated in advance of the meeting with the GSENZH Board pack 17.10.23, pages 25-41.
- Maxine Narburgh thanked Jo Simmons, South East LEP for her feedback on the ToR which has been very helpful and much appreciated.
- The ToR have been revised for adoption as an interim document until the new GSENZH governance structure is in place, April 2024. This is to enable a transitional approach to the new structure to support the continued participation of all those currently involved. Additional representation will be required in future by DESNZ such as the inclusion of the academic sector.
- **The recommendations of the GSENZH Management to the GSENZH Board in respect of the GSENZ Board governance were as follows:**
 - (a) To agree and adopt the interim Terms of Reference
 - (b) To agree the set up and membership of a Hub Board governance transition working group
 - (c) To note that the governance structure should be aligned with local priorities and reflect the breadth of stakeholders in the region, that there will be a transitional period, however, a new governance structure should be approved, and new Terms of Reference adopted by 1 April 2024.
 - (d) To note that the proposed governance structure will be shaped by DESNZ requirements, views of the Hub board, recommendations from evaluations and the evidence based provided by Local Partnerships.
 - (e) To agree that the new governance framework & terms of reference are adopted at the February 2024 Hub Board meeting.
- A collective review of the interim ToR Version 2.0, October 2023, section by section, was undertaken at the meeting by GSENZH Board members led by Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH who updated parts of the document during the meeting in response to comments agreed by the Board members. Key points discussed were as follows:
- **Status of the Terms of Reference** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH highlighted that the Accountable Body Agreement had expired and was deemed by CPCA legal advice as no longer needed for the governance process. Jo Simmons, South East LEP proposed that the Board should note that the Terms of Reference supersede the Accountable Body Agreement, which will not be renewed. Maxine Narburgh confirmed that this would be minuted.

- **Section 2. Objectives of the Greater South East Net Zero Programme** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH highlighted that the objectives were updated with the new MOU objectives from DESNZ and these will be appended to the ToR.
- **Section 4. Hub Board Roles and Responsibilities** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH asked Board members to read this section through and confirm that they were content with the content.
- Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked for clarification about the “Grant” referred to in this section and whether this Grant was from DESNZ, and for clarification about the statement that “The Hub Board shall have the authority to make decisions...” and whether the Board were in an advisory or decision-making capacity. Jo Simmons reflected her understanding that the GSENZH Board is in an advisory capacity and makes recommendations to CPCA, which holds accountability for the decisions. Jo Simmons highlighted the importance of this point being clarified since South East LEP requires that their GSENZH Board representative is someone with the appropriate authority in their own right to make recommendations and that this clarification would likewise be important for other Board members.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH confirmed that she would check the above point with the CPCA Monitoring Officer.
- Jo Simmons, South East LEP requested that CPCA specify what level of finance would be involved in the recommendations required of Board members.
- Nick Bell, CPCA confirmed that this point would be checked with the CPCA Monitoring Officer
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP asked for clarity about the difference between and definition of a recommendation and a decision. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that Board members are acting in an advisory capacity making recommendations that are then acted upon by the CPCA officer with the delegated authority, therefore by so doing the Board members are making a decision. Maxine Narburgh agreed that the wording needed to be tightened up.

ACTION 5. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH and Nick Bell, CPCA to clarify with the CPCA Monitoring Officer whether Board members would be making recommendations or decisions, how and recommendation and decisions are defined within the interim GSENZH Board Terms of Reference, and what level of finance will be involved.

- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP observed that smaller financial decisions could be taken by the GSENZH Board but that the relevant thresholds for that delegation would need to be set out.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH clarified that such delegations and thresholds were already set out and had been taken to the CPCA Board and approved in July 2023.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that Board members should have delegated decision-making powers from their organisations so that the necessary responsibility exists within the Board to make recommendations.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council reflected her understanding that as an individual on the Board from Cambridgeshire County Council she would need to be sure that she had the necessary delegation from her organisation to advise the Board. However, it would be helpful to have someone talk through this with her in more detail.
- Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP agreed this was necessary to know this since it was a liability issue.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH proposed that the CPCA legal team walk Board members through what was required from Board members as regards the responsibilities and necessary delegations.

ACTION 6. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH to set up a meeting with the CPCA legal team and GSENZH Board members to walk GSENZH Board members through what is required of them in terms of their responsibilities and necessary delegations.

- Jo Simmons, South East LEP observed that Board members are in a decision-making capacity and yet are making recommendations to the Combined Authority. Board members

need to be sure that they have the right authority and what governance needs to be complied with within each member organisation.

- Simon Wyke, Greater London Authority asked, if the Board members are making recommendations, whether this was from the content or finance perspective as these are different within the Authority and the combination needs to be right. If financial decisions are needed this would be difficult because the Authority has senior people with very limited financial authority. Maxine Narburgh agreed that the financial values involved would make it difficult for many people to have sufficient authority, so this was the role of CPCA, but it was still necessary for Board representatives to have their own delegation. Nick Bell, CPCA affirmed that the financial liability sits with CPCA and that the GSENZH Board is not committing funding. Nick Bell asked that GSENZH Board members check with their own organisations about their constitution and have a discussion with their own legal people and Monitoring Officers about their position in advance of the meeting to be set up for Board members with the CPCA legal adviser.
- Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked about new Board members coming in. Jo Simmons highlighted that South East LEP will cease on 31.03.24 and asked how the upper tier local authorities in the LEP area who will take on its functions will be involved. Jo Simmons pointed out that there may be more than one representative, and it is not yet known what the authorities will require in terms of their constitution. South East LEP is required to advise them about their Board function.

ACTION 7. GSENZH Board members to check with their own organisations about their constitution and have discussion with their own legal people and Monitoring Officers about their position, prior to the meeting to be set up for them with the CPCA legal adviser and Monitoring Officer regarding what is required of them in terms of their responsibilities and necessary delegations.

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH proposed that the wording within the sentence “The Hub Board shall have the authority to make decisions in relation to the proposed deployment of the Grant” be changed to “...the authority to make recommendations for decisions...”

ACTION 8. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH to change, in Section 4. Hub Board Roles and Responsibilities of the interim GSENZH Board Terms of Reference, the wording within the sentence “The Hub Board shall have the authority to make decisions in relation to the proposed deployment of the Grant” to “...the authority to make recommendations for decisions...”

- Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked whether the reference to LEPs in respect of the constitution of the Net Zero Hubs in the Single Assurance Framework would be updated.
- Nick Bell, CPCA advised that the Single Assurance Framework was for CPCA. The CPCA Business Board will be subsumed into CPCA in line with the LEP transition and the Single Assurance Framework will take out the reference to the LEPs from 01.04.24.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH asked the Board members to note that the Board is acting in an advisory capacity with regard to the financial element.
- Jo Simmons, South East LEP queried the sentence “The Hub Board shall be required to approve...” in relation to the allocation of budgets, grants and funding. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH proposed that this could be changed to “make recommendations” and the document was updated accordingly.
- **Section 5. Board Composition** - Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP proposed that since the LEP areas were changing a map should be produced to set out and define the new areas.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH acknowledged that while some LEPs were based within the geography of single county, others covered a wider area. There is a need to make this more equitable, but the situation is complex, for example, there are climate partnerships to be considered. Ultimately the map will need to be redrawn. Representation is needed from all

the areas, so if there is no LEP, a local authority can be the representative as agreed with the GSENZH Board.

- Jo Simmons, South East LEP advised that there were three economic areas in SELEP and the upper tier local authorities each want representation. Currently there is only a single representative, so there is a need to achieve equitability of representation.
- Nick Bell, CPCA noted that it would not be practicable to have every single local authority represented, so there would need to be some amalgamation rather than individual representation.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council commented that there needs to be discussion about what sort of experience is wanted on the GSENZH Board. It is necessary to have delivery experience, which an economic person would not necessarily have.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH confirmed that recommendations about criteria for membership would be presented to the GSENZH Board by Local Partnerships, the consultants for GSENZH that are working on the revised governance arrangements.
- Jo Simmons, South East LEP requested that feedback be provided about the experience and technical knowledge required of Board members so that this could be taken into local area discussions about representation.
- Simon Wyke, GLA observed that if Board members are making recommendations, then people with content knowledge are needed to appraise them. CPCA can then go through the delegation to allocate the funding. Finance people were not needed.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH agreed and confirmed that this was noted. Maxine Narburgh advised that a workshop will be held for the GSENZH Board to go through the Local Partnership recommendations.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP asked whether businesspeople were needed. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH confirmed that a broader representation of stakeholders was needed to bring in wider perspectives and skills, for example academics might help to scale activities.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP asked whether the GSENZH Board would expand. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that this is part of the mapping work that Local Partnerships is going to do. An application process could be considered. LEP replacement would not necessarily be like-for-like. The experience needed was a significant consideration.
- **6. Recruitment of Hub Board Members** – Nick Bell, CPCA asked whether it was realistic to recruit an independent Chairperson in the timeframe of the interim arrangements to 31.03.24. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that Local Partnerships was preparing the job description for the Chairperson but proposed to amend the wording to state that this is the intention and that a volunteer will be requested in the interim. Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP agreed with this approach.

ACTION 9. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH to amend the wording in Section 6. Recruitment of Hub Board Members of the interim GSENZH Board Terms of Reference, to state that the recruitment of the Chairperson is intended, and a volunteer will be requested in the interim period.

- Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked whether the governance transition referred to new people being recruited and the sub-board structure. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH agreed to add a definition for “governance transition” earlier in the document.

ACTION 10. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH to add a definition of “governance transition” near the beginning of the interim GSENZH Board Terms of Reference document.

- Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP requested that the word “then” be added to the wording “The Chairperson shall be appointed...” to be clear that this was post the transition, since it was otherwise confusing. The ToT document was updated accordingly.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH asked whether the Chairperson should be appointed for more than one year. Jo Simmons, South East LEP agreed that it would be helpful to have consistency and observed that it took time for someone to become bedded into the role.

Maxine Narburgh suggested three years and Jo Simmons agreed, commenting that the Chairperson added value and that relationship-building is important.

- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP commented that it could take up to a year to recruit someone and that a lead time for appointing the Chairperson should be allowed for.

ACTION 11. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH to amend Section 6. Recruitment of Hub Board Members of the interim GSENGH Board Terms of Reference document so that the tenure of the Chairperson is shown as three years and to note that a sufficient lead time should be instituted for recruitment.

- **Working Groups** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH highlighted that working group membership is to include at least one GSENGH Board member and asked whether the Board was content with the working group arrangements. Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP asked whether this happened currently, and Maxine confirmed that this had been the arrangement for the Rural Community Energy Fund panel.
- **Regional Sub-boards** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH highlighted that the text under this section is a place-holder. Jo Simmons, South East LEP commented that the first paragraph in this section still needs definition. Maxine Narburgh confirmed that this was so. Jo Simmons asked that the section therefore reference the governance transition. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH agreed to insert this reference.

ACTION 12. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH, is to reference the governance transition within the subsection, Regional Sub-boards of the interim GSENGH Board Terms of Reference, to reflect that this is still to be defined.

- Nick Bell, CPCA asked whether the areas to be in the north and south of the region for the purposes of the sub-boards have been identified. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH advised that this is still to be confirmed. More work is being done by Local Partnerships and will be brought back to the Board for their review.
- **Section 7. Accountability [Communications]** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH highlighted that the GSENGH Communications Protocol and Communications Framework are out of date. An Operations Manager has now been appointed for GSENGH, who has a communications background and will be able to revise these documents. Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked for the section heading to be changed from “Accountability” to “Communications”. The ToR document was updated accordingly.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP asked whether there was a schedule in place for the Local Partnerships work to ensure that it would be completed in time for the April 2024 transition. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH advised that while Local Partnerships were behind with their activities, they were committed to completing the work. However, should they be unable to meet the necessary timelines for the governance framework and ToR, as a contingency arrangement, another consultant used by GSENGH who had supported the development of the retrofit working group could be brought in to meet the schedule.
- **10. General Operating Procedures** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH advised that this section had not been changed. Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP asked whether there was reference made to the circulation of the minutes and whether the timing for the circulation of the GSENGH Board Pack was specified to allow sufficient time for pre-reading. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH confirmed that the text specified that the agenda was to be circulated five days prior to the meeting and proposed that this was updated to include the Board papers. Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP agreed with this suggestion. The document was updated accordingly.
- Mark Saunders, Oxfordshire County Council asked whether the Board meetings could be recorded. Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked what the purpose would be. Mark Saunders clarified that this was to check what was said and to be clear about that. Jo Simmons was content provided that the purpose was defined. Nicolette Jeffreys, New Anglia LEP agreed

that it can be useful to hear the context of the discussion. Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP commented that she was content for the meeting to be recorded provided that it was not shared publicly and that it was deleted within a reasonable timeframe.

ACTION 13. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH to consider how recording of GSENGH Board meetings might be done as appropriate and to come back to the GSENGH Board with a way forward.

- **Decision-making and Voting** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH advised that information about delegations for decision-making would be added to the ToR as an appendix.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP suggested that a definition for key decisions should be added and what the decision-making route was. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH advised that it has been noted in the document and will also be noted in the appendix what the delegations will cover.
- **Quorum** – Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council asked for confirmation that the quorum of six was drawn from a pool of 10 LEPs or Business Boards, with the Greater London Authority and CPCA as the Accountable Body excluded. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH confirmed that this was so and that in a situation where fewer than six members were available to attend a GSENGH Board meeting that proxy voting could be used.
- **Section 14. Accountable Decision-making** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH advised that this section would be likely to change in the future ToR and be informed by the GSENGH strategic priorities and Operating Strategy.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP asked, regarding the operating strategy, whether different areas would be allowed to make their own plans. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH advised that the operating strategy was circulated to the GSENGH Board in March 2023. Local Partnerships have done mapping work looking at the strategic fit for different areas, and this is set out in the slide deck within the GSENGH Board Pack 17.10.23 (pages 42-73). GSENGH is also looking into this at local authority level. Representation on the Board needs to have a strategic fit for areas. The GSENGH Board workshop 21.11.23 will look at strategic priorities. GSENGH is aware there are gaps.
- Simon Wyke, Greater London Authority asked whether the sub-boards would develop a sub-regional strategy. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH confirmed that this was the intention.
- **Section 15. Operational Team** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH asked the Board to note that the list of documents in this section has been updated, including dates.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH proposed that the sentence that states that the Regional Head has freedom to deliver and act including “...the delegation of technical consultancy allocation of up to £5K and discretion to reallocate up of 1% of the revenue budget between cost centres...” was out of date and should be removed. Jo Simmons, South East LEP agreed. The ToR document was updated accordingly.
- **Section 16. Stakeholder Engagement** – Jo Simmons, South East LEP requested a correction change to the sentence beginning “This remit has expended...” to “This remit has extended...”. The ToR document was updated accordingly.
- **Section 18. Scrutiny Arrangements** – Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH highlighted that the CPCA Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee which has oversight of GSENGH is now referenced in this section.
- **Section 19. Exit Strategy** – Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked what the view of DESNZ is about the revenue generation model. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH confirmed that DESNZ has agreed that the five Net Zero Hubs should be a free-at-the-point-of-use service. Jo Simmons proposed that this section be removed as it was misleading.

ACTION 14. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH to remove Section 19. Exit Strategy from the interim GSENGH Board Terms of Reference.

BOARD DECISION: The GSENGH Board accepted the following GSENGH Management recommendations in respect of the GSENGH Board governance:

- (a) To agree and adopt the interim Terms of Reference, **subject to the amendments agreed and clarifications obtained from the CPCA Monitoring officer, as discussed at the GSENZH Board meeting 17.10.23.**
- (b) To agree the set up and membership of a Hub Board governance transition working group
- (c) To note that the governance structure should be aligned with local priorities and reflect the breadth of stakeholders in the region, that there will be a transitional period, however, a new governance structure should be approved, and new Terms of Reference adopted by 1 April 2024.
- (d) To note that the proposed governance structure will be shaped by DESNZ requirements, views of the Hub board, recommendations from evaluations and the evidence based provided by Local Partnerships.
- (e) To agree that the new governance framework & terms of reference are adopted at the February 2024 Hub Board meeting.
- Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP thanked Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH and Jo Simmons, South East LEP for their work on the ToR.

ACTION 15. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH to get the final version of the interim GSENZH Board Terms of Reference agreed with Nick Bell, CPCA and a copy circulated to GSENZH Board members.

5. Regional Skills Pilot – Project Funding Requests

- The Regional Skills Pilot programme, which aims to enhance domestic retrofit skills training, is funded by DESNZ, and is to be delivered by the Net Zero Hubs, was introduced to the GSENZH Board at their previous meeting, 05.09.23.
- This agenda item was introduced by Genevieve Dady, GSENZH. A paper about the Greater South East Regional Skills Pilot Evaluation was provided to GSENZH Board members in advance of the meeting with the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23, pages 74-76.
- Genevieve Dady, GSENZH, advised that a call for expressions of interest had gone out in September 2023. Genevieve acknowledged that the time-frame in which responses could be made had been tight and expressed thanks to those who had responded. Eight expressions of interest were received, and these have been evaluated. A summary of the project appraisals and their costs was circulated to the GSENZH Board in advance of the meeting.
- **The recommendations of the GSENZH Management to the GSENZH Board in respect of the Regional Skills Pilot were as follows:**
 - (a) To approve projects 1 to 3 in Table 1, referred to in the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23, which have passed internal assessment and have been recommended for unconditional approval or approval based on the conditions outlined in Appendix A (confidential.)
 - (b) To approve projects 4 & 5, referred to in the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23, subject to additional funds being made available by DESNZ, which have passed internal assessment and been recommended for unconditional approval or approval based on the conditions outlined in Appendix A (confidential.)
 - (c) To agree to Hub providing staff resource to support the process and individual projects as required (recharged to the Skills MoU)
 - (d) To agree the procurement of a consultant to provide a synopsis of the individual plans into a single document.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH explained that GSENZH is waiting to hear from DESNZ about the level of funding to be allocated to each Net Zero Hub and when it will be provided. Recommendations made by the Board would be on that basis.
- Genevieve Dady added that an extension to the timeframe for the Regional Skills Pilot is expected due to the ongoing wait for the promised funding from DESNZ, and that there is confidence that further funding will be forthcoming from DESNZ after March 2024.

- GSENGH Board members had the following questions and comments about the Regional Skills Pilot project appraisals:
- Nick Bell, CPCA thanked the GSENGH operations team for their good work.
- Nick Bell, CPCA queried why the Buckinghamshire Business First pilot project had been ranked over that of the Greater London Authority, which was higher scoring, although it was acknowledged that Buckinghamshire Business First required a smaller budget. Genevieve Dady, GSENGH advised that Buckinghamshire Business First was an area with lesser ability in terms of domestic retrofit skills training. A successful training pilot in Buckinghamshire would make a relatively greater difference to that area. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH confirmed that while the Buckinghamshire project had not scored well in terms of project readiness, other aspects of the project that would come forward at the Phase 2 stage of the pilot were good but had not been set out in the bid. Nick Bell, CPCA suggested that the scoring mechanism used by GSENGH needs to be reviewed as it had not been able to fully account for some of the positive elements of the Buckinghamshire bid. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH agreed that the scoring mechanism should be reviewed and explained that the assessment had placed emphasis on project readiness due to the limited timescales of the Regional Skills Pilot set by DESNZ.

ACTION 16. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH to review the scoring mechanism used for the Regional Skills Pilot bid assessments to understand what can be learned for future project assessment processes.

- Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked whether GSENGH would go back to those projects not shortlisted with feedback so that they could understand how their project could be improved and whether there would be opportunity to apply for future funding. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH advised that a decision about future funding was awaited from the Minister for DESNZ, which was expected in spring 2024, and confirmed that feedback would be given to unsuccessful applicants and that GSENGH appreciated the work that had gone into the bids.
- Simon Wyke, Greater London Authority commented that the Authority's project bid was created based on the ability to deliver in the limited timeframe, and although they recognised that the Greater London Authority bid required a larger budget, would like assurance that the Buckinghamshire project would be able to deliver in the timeframe. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH clarified that the Buckinghamshire project offers something different and looks at installer skills and could be supported by networks, whereas the Greater London Authority bid required procurement and focused on retrofit coordination. The three top-scoring shortlisted projects were very strong. However, the other Net Zero Hubs may have a surplus of funds available if their proportion of the funding is not fully allocated to projects in their areas. This is not known yet. If there is surplus funding available, GSENGH will put forward the shortlisted projects ranked 4-5.
- Genevieve Dady, GSENGH acknowledged the point made by Nick Bell, CPCA about scoring. Genevieve reflected that the scoring tends to be technically based and a place based element should be considered, however, that projects can score well due to good bid writing. Genevieve affirmed that the Buckinghamshire project had been regarded as having considerable potential.
- Mark Saunders, Oxfordshire County Council observed that delivery is key within the timescales available and asked what would be done if DESNZ do not revert soon about the position on and timing of funding. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH confirmed that this matter sits with DESNZ. GSENGH is waiting for the MOU for the Regional Skills Pilot from DESNZ and has asked for a letter of assurance from the Department in the interim. However, until something has been received from DESNZ in writing, budget cannot be set aside to work on the programme.

- Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked for information about the synopsis mentioned in the GSENZH management recommendation point (d). Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH clarified that DESNZ requires a synopsis of the multiple plans in a comprehensive document that presents them as a pilot. GSENZH does not have capacity to do this so a consultant will be engaged to do this piece of work.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council asked how much the staff resource would cost. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that if the Buckinghamshire project went ahead then intensive support would be required, otherwise the other projects would just require grant management. Sheryl French commented that this should be factored in when considering the assessment of bids. Maxine Narburgh clarified that staff costs would be charged to the Skills MOU.
- Maxine Narburgh asked GSENZH Board members whether they agreed to the recommendations for the Regional Skills Pilot set out in the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23. Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP confirmed that they would abstain from voting on the GSENZH Board decision as the bidders of one of the shortlisted projects. Simon Wyke, Greater London Authority and Jo Simmons, South East LEP also proposed to abstain from the vote. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that none of the shortlisted bids had come from the Greater London Authority or the South East LEP but from other organisations, so that Simon Wyke and Jo Simmons as their representatives were able to vote.

BOARD DECISION: The GSENZH Board accepted the GSENZH Management recommendations in respect of the Regional Skills Pilot as follows:

(a) To approve projects 1 to 3 in Table 1, referred to in the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23, which have passed internal assessment and have been recommended for unconditional approval or approval based on the conditions outlined in Appendix A (confidential.)

(b) To approve projects 4 & 5, referred to in the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23, subject to additional funds being made available by DESNZ, which have passed internal assessment and been recommended for unconditional approval or approval based on the conditions outlined in Appendix A (confidential.)

(c) To agree to Hub providing staff resource to support the process and individual projects as required (recharged to the Skills MoU)

(d) To agree the procurement of a consultant to provide a synopsis of the individual plans into a single document.

7. Regional Hub Manager Report

- An update from the GSENZH Regional Hub Manager, Maxine Narburgh, was provided to Board members with the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23 in advance of the meeting. Due to limited time only one item from the report was highlighted at the meeting:
- **Recruitment** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that a Head of Operations has now been successfully recruited.
- An offer has been made to an applicant for the Retrofit Contracts Manager post, however this was declined in favour of a permanent post, whereas GSENZH was offering an 18-month fixed-term contract.
- A recruitment process for the data roles for the Energy Efficiency team is currently underway.

8. GSENZH Board Workshop, 21 November 2023

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that the GSENZH Board workshop, which is scheduled to take place 21.11.23, in person, in London, and to which both GSENZH Board members and local authorities have been invited, is to look at strategic priorities for GSENZH for the financial year ahead.
- Maxine Narburgh asked whether the Board had any suggestion for the workshop regarding stakeholders to invite, or topics or agenda items to include.

- Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP requested that a representative from the Hertfordshire Climate Change Partnership representative be invited.
- Simon Wyke, Greater London Authority proposed that London Councils be invited and any of the leads of their seven workstreams that were relevant to the workshop.
- Jo Simmons, South East LEP asked that at least one representative from South East LEP's upper tier local authorities be invited and more if possible.

ACTION 17. GSENZH Board members to send the names and contact details of their suggested workshop attendees to Erica Sutton, GSENZH.

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH asked whether the Board had any suggestions for the workshop regarding topics or agenda items to include as strategic priorities.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP asked whether Local Partnerships would attend to provide crucial context. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH advised that it would be better to keep the Local Partnerships governance work separate from strategy. Local Partnerships were intending to circulate a paper in November 2023 for the Board to review. However, a separate session could be arranged.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP commented that there is some cross-over to the strategy in the Local Partnerships work and asked whether there is anything that Local Partnerships could bring forward to the Board workshop in this respect. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH proposed that GSENZH Board members look at the Local Partnerships slide deck included in the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23 (pages 42-73) and consider whether this suggests anything, however it was quite high-level information, and the voice of the local authorities was more likely to provide insight about local priorities. Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP agreed that it would be more helpful for the Board members and local authority attendees to have a **sharing session to put forward their own local priorities**.
- Simon Wyke proposed that **a session on spatial planning would be useful to bring in local area energy planning and heat zoning**. It would be useful to **talk about the sub-regional boards to generate some understanding about those**.
- Jo Simmons, South East LEP agreed that the workshopping of local strategic priorities would be useful. **Could net zero and business support be covered**. There is a disconnect between what the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) think businesses need and what businesses really need and GSENZH could support this alignment, perhaps with an advisory link between DBT and DESNZ. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH agreed that businesses are being signposted to GSENZH which is not part of its remit.

ACTION 18. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH to discuss with Patrick Allcorn, DESNZ the issue of net zero and business support and the need for better alignment between what is offered and what is needed.

- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP suggested **local area energy planning and how heat pumps, EVs and renewables match to infrastructure and network capacity**.
- Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP commented that if new people come in it is **very important to set the scene, as some players do not understand what we do, and for everyone to be able to think ahead to the strategic priorities going forward**. I agree that business is left out.

ACTION 19. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH to put a draft programme together for the GSENZH Board workshop 21.11.23 and circulate it to the Board and invite further stakeholders to attend as suggested by Board members.

9. Forward Plan and Horizon Scanning

- The latest GSENZH Board Forward Plan was circulated to Board members in advance of the meeting with the GSENZH Board Pack 17.10.23.

10. Any Other Business

- No other business was raised.

11. Dates of Future Meetings

BOARD DECISION: The next meeting of the GSENZH Board will be a workshop to discuss strategic priorities, to take place 21 November 2023, 10:00-12:30, in person, in London. Programme and venue to be confirmed.

- Subsequent regular Board meeting dates are scheduled 10:00-12:30, to take place virtually, on the following dates:
 - 5 December 2023 - Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council, to chair the meeting
 - 23 January 2024 - A meeting chair is to be confirmed and a volunteer is needed.

ACTION 20. GSENZH Board members to consider whether they can volunteer to chair for the GSENZH Board meeting 23.01.24.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record by Sheryl French (Cambridgeshire County Council) for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.	
SIGNATURE	DATE