

# ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

## DRAFT MINUTES FOR AGREEMENT 27<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019

### MINUTES OF THE ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2019 IN THE TACK ROOM, SNAPE MALTINGS.

<b>PRESENT</b>	Edward Greenwell	(EG)	<b>(Chairman, Farmer Nominee)</b>
	Tim Beach	(TB)	(Snape Parish Council Nominee)
	Alison Andrews	(AA)	(A&O Association Nominee)
	Jane Marson	(JM)	(Landowner Nominee)
	Brian Johnson	(BJ)	(Bawdsey Parish Council Nominee)
	David McGinity	(DMcG)	(Butley Parish Council Nominee)
	Harry Young	(HY)	(Business Representative)
	Colin Chamberlain	(CC)	(Iken Parish Council)
	Peter Palmer	(PP)	(Aldeburgh TC Nominee)
	Elizabeth Stanton	(ES)	(Estuary Trust in lieu of Guy Heald)
	Frances Barnwell	(FB)	(Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council in lieu of Peter Smith)
Amanda Bettinson	(AB)	(Partnership Secretary)	
<b>ADVISORS</b>	David Kemp	(DK)	(Environment Agency)
	Karen Thomas	(KT)	(IDB)
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Guy Heald	(GH)	(Finance and Business representative)
	Peter Smith	(PS)	(Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council Nominee)
	Diane Ling	(DL)	(Ecological nominee)
<b>MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b>	Andrew McDonald, Janine Edge		

#### ACTION

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were no declarations of interest.
2. The Chairman welcomed Frances Barnwell who had recently been elected as a parish councillor for Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council and was attending in lieu of Peter Smith.
3. This meeting had been called specifically to discuss the restructuring arrangements which needed to be included in the IDB business case which will now be submitted to the Environment Agency in late June. It was thought the Partnership may not be able to reach a final agreement immediately and a small group may need to meet to finalise arrangements. Tim Beach had had a number of discussions with the Estuary Trust, IDB and EA to produce a proposed structure that would be accountable, transparent and workable showing that the IDB are delivering the Alde and Ore Estuary project but is supported by the community.

#### PROPOSED STRUCTURE

**Strategic Board** - It was proposed that the **Strategic Board** would consist of 6 parish councillors (as at present on the AOEP), 1 Suffolk County Councillor and 2 East Suffolk Councillors, A&O Association Representative and an IDB rate payer. County & District councillors, the Association and IDB rate payers all have various sources of funding available. **Advisors:** IDB project manager, Estuary Trust, EA, NE and CPE/ESC would be non-voting advisory members.

**The role** of the strategic board would be to 'own' the Estuary Plan and to steer and endorse options put by the Project Support Team and to receive reports from the IDB and question them on the delivery of the project, its costs and timing.

**The Project Support Team** (previously Implementation Group) would be the technical group responsible for delivery of works, monitoring, planning, communications and input to grant applications to the Trust. Members would be IDB project Manager, IDB comms and other technical staff as required, Environmental Rep, Estuary Trustee, EA, NE SCC (Officer) and others to be co-opted when required. It was **proposed** that it should be chaired by the main board chair.

**Key Stakeholder Group** would consist of democratically elected estuary-wide representatives for community and business (already set up and attended by parish council flood defence representatives) and would be a two-way communications group to inform the community and the Strategic Board, not a decision-making body.

**The Estuary Trust** would remain as the fundraising and grant making body.

A detailed discussion was held on the makeup of the 'Strategic Board' and other committees. Several concerns were raised:

- The Partnership expressed deep concern that this should have been discussed more fully before this, particularly as a number of people were being 'dropped' in various committees. Time was now very short to agree a structure for inclusion with the business case in June. However, TB explained it had been difficult to negotiate and he wanted to arrive at an agreed option for the Partnership to consider fully.
- It was pointed out that if the Partnership was dissolved The Trust would lose its sole member (which is the AOEP) and would require alterations to its constitution, which could include a minimum and maximum number of trustees, quorum rules and others.
- David Kemp (Environment Agency) agreed a properly representative structure was required and from the EA's point of view it was not that necessary to change the present structure. It was important to show that the IDB is not a contractor and that they are delivering the project of their own will, supported by the community. Potentially 88% of the upper estuary business case would be FDGiA, **should this be agreed**, and the structure will need to show support for the IDB delivering the project.
- Karen Thomas (IDB) advised that the Benacre Board also had political representation which would be welcome with the Alde and Ore project as it brings both financial and political support. It was also important to keep the community at the heart of the project and the Key Stakeholder Group would be crucial to ensure that members of the public can take part.
- Peter Palmer thought that although the structure was very transparent, it looks unwieldy. However, there was a time issue and a decision was needed relatively quickly. The relationship with the IDB was twofold – they owned the project and were responsible for delivery but were also advising the Board on options.
- The Chairman was concerned that some parish councillors may not have the commitment required as it had been difficult to engage some of the parishes.
- Alison Andrews expressed surprise at the paper and thought much more thinking on the detail was required. She was concerned that the whole essence of the Partnership which was a ground-breaking community partnership would be lost with this structure. It needed a broader and more flexible approach, not just councillors whose numbers since the recent election have been reduced to 55 from 88 and their time may well be

reduced. The lower estuary will need a flexible structure particularly if the funding is not available.

- EG noted that a key point will be that the Strategic Board may have to make some difficult decisions if, for example, funding is an issue and too narrow a membership of the Strategic Board will make this difficult. The Board needed people who know about the estuary.
- Frances Barnwell agreed that having councillors is the right way to go but that may have to accept that it will not all be perfect. She also said it was important to know who was in overall charge of the project.
- Andrew McDonald (attending member of the public) agreed it was not a straight forward project with one specific senior executive responsible but it was a useful move to have councillors at the strategic level. It should be possible to train councillors to be useful to the project and raise the consciousness through the Key Stakeholders Group, which at the last meeting was very positive. KT made it clear that the IDB project manager reported direct to the IDB board and noted that on the Islington Pump Station project Phil Camamile (CEO IDB) was the senior executive responsible for the project.
- Elizabeth Stanton raised the potential conflict of an IDB board member as a voting member of the Strategic Board. Jane Marson noted that it came down to how the public perceives them and, in reality, it could be said that everyone has some form of interest or conflict.
- Janine Edge (attending member of the public) reminded the Partnership that there was a non-reliance letter signed by the AOEP/Trust and IDB. It may need to be checked to see if this needed any amendment as the delivery phase was upon us. She also noted that detailed and specific terms of reference were required for all committees so that it was clear exactly where responsibilities lie.
- Colin Chamberlain enquired which committee formed the 'engine' to run this project. It was agreed that the Project Support Team (erstwhile Implementation Group) which would meet monthly or even more frequently, would be where most of the work was carried out, but the Strategic Board was required to give political and community endorsement for transparency reasons. The Strategic Board may have to be in the position of stopping and repositioning the project for reasons of lack of funds, engineering issues or even environmental issues.
- AA needed time to discuss with Association trustees as the structure was changing radically.
- **It was agreed** to form a working group to agree final changes to the structure, terms of reference, roles and responsibilities. Tim Beach, Edward Greenwell, Alison Andrews, Colin Chamberlain, Frances Barnwell, Liz Stanton and Amanda Bettinson agreed to attend. An urgent meeting would be arranged.

**[Post meeting discussion:** Edward Greenwell, Tim Beach, Alison Andrews, Colin Chamberlain, Frances Barnwell and Amanda Bettinson met to discuss the structure, and are proposing a number of amendments which are still under discussion. The main concern with the dissolution of the Partnership was losing the breadth of experience and the feel that this was a community partnership. There needs to be further detailed discussion on the terms of reference for each committee and where a number of activities should lie (environmental monitoring, saltings projects, future maintenance etc. This will aim to be concluded for the Partnership meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> June).