

**ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP**  
**DRAFT MINUTES TO BE AGREED 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019**

**MINUTES OF THE ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2019 IN ORFORD TOWN HALL**

<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)
	Guy Heald	(GH)	(Finance and Business representative)
	Harry Young	(HY)	(Business Representative)
	Colin Chamberlain	(CC)	(Iken Parish Council)
	Peter Palmer	(PP)	(Aldeburgh TC Nominee)
	Frances Barnwell	(FB)	(Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council)
	Diane Ling	(DL)	(Ecological nominee)
	Amanda Bettinson	(AB)	(Partnership Secretary)
<b>ADVISORS</b>	David Kemp	(DK)	(Environment Agency)
	Jane Maxim	(JMaxim)	(Funding Chairman, Estuary Trust)
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	David McGinity	(DMcG)	(Butley Parish Council Nominee)
	Edward Boyle	(EB)	(Natural England)
<b>MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b>			Andrew McDonald, Janine Edge (JE)

**ACTION**

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were no declarations of interest.

Frances Barnwell has now replaced Peter Smith on Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council. Edward Boyle has replaced Emma Hay from Natural England but sent his apologies for this meeting.

2. **MINUTES OF** 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019 Agreed and 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019 Agreed.

The Chairman noted that a meeting with Therese Coffey MP, Anglian Water and UK Power Networks (all of whom have assets in the estuary), LEP and possibly Sizewell is to be held at Snape Maltings (with thanks to Harry Young for hosting this) but it has not yet been possible to set a date due to the political uncertainty.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

i) **The Reliance letter** between IDB/Partnership and Trust had been checked by DK and he confirmed that it covered all the legal issues from the EA perspective at present but that once the final structure was agreed it should be checked again by all bodies to ensure all parties were legally covered for risk.

**IDB/Trust/AOEP**

ii) **Saltings Projects update:** EG noted that Trudi Wakelin (MMO) had replied with no good explanation, still less an apologetic recognition that the MMO had failed in this matter. AA reported that she had spoken to Trudi Wakelin recently who said the MMO were rewriting the licencing rules and AA explained the difficulties with the inadequate system. EG agreed to write to Therese Coffey MP to see what changes can be made to ensure these delays are not repeated.

**EG**

iii) **Slaughden update** DK said some shingle had returned but there would not be a shingle recharge this year although the EA retain the licence to do so if required.

iv) **SMP policy review phase 3 progress** AA reported that there will be a public consultation during September to November on the change of policy from no active intervention after 2025 to **managed resilience between 2025 and 2050** on the area between the Aldeburgh Martello Tower and the beach just north of Orford Lighthouse. The Partnership agreed this was sensible way forward and hoped that managed resilience would come eventually.

#### 4. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

##### i) Structure Diagram

There was considerable discussion on a number of issues with the proposed structure.

- i) It was agreed it was essential to show that the IDB was not under instruction and **DK** confirmed that the documents supported this. Monetary contributions would come from the community via the Estuary Trust. It was essential to show that the community supported the estuary plan and it was accepted that the makeup of the Strategic Board was designed to do this. However, there needed to be a clear distinction between ‘supporting’ and ‘controlling’ and although the Estuary Plan was the domain of Strategic Board it was queried whether the IDB might actually have to be the final arbiter should there need to be a change to the plan. No particular alteration was proposed to the structure on this point.
- ii) **GB** was concerned that there was still some important terminology that doesn’t sit well in Technical Group and that confidentiality and data protection issues between the IDB and Estuary Trust needed to be agreed.
- iii) It was not certain yet as to the frequency of meetings for either the Strategic Board or the Technical Group (although 3 monthly and 1 monthly respectively had been mooted) as this could be determined by IDB requirements who are managing the plan as to whether they needed decisions on a change of course, e.g. due to unforeseen catastrophic event, lack of funds etc. If the project was continuing successfully there may be little requirement to meet regularly. **GH** questioned why the IDB had not been given enough time to consider the structure documents but **TB** assured the Partnership that the IDB had been involved in discussions from the outset, particularly when Karen Thomas was in post. There had been considerable discussion and updates to the papers but IDB, EA and Trust were sent draft papers 8 days before the meeting for comments prior to the agenda and papers being circulated.
- iv) It was thought by some that the diagram looked complicated and whether there was any means of simplifying the committees, by possibly including the Technical Group and even the Key Stakeholder Group (a non-executive communications group) in with the Strategic Board, but the environmental monitoring (integral to the plan), maintenance and saltmarsh group needed to be incorporated somewhere as well. The Technical Group was the IDB project working group and was required to coordinate on the ground works and liaison/communications with the local community as well as environmental, planning, waste issues etc.
- v) JMaxim noted that High Net Worth donors like to see a structure and efficient business model, but the National Lottery want to see a community partnership. No-one requires this to be over bureaucratic, but it was difficult to get the

balance right. Who was finally accountable for the whole project needed to be agreed.

- vi) Andrew McDonald stated that a streamlined structure was an advantage with community support.

**ACTION:** A further meeting will be arranged to discuss GB/IDB concerns as detailed above and discuss the TORs but this cannot be held before the Key Stakeholders Group meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> July (due to diary commitments) so any feedback at that meeting can be fed into the final draft for approval in September. [meeting agreed for 1 August EG, TB, AA, FB, CC, GH, GB, AB to attend]

**ACTION:** Trust and IDB to detail their amendments for discussion on 1<sup>st</sup> August

**GB/JM**

- vii) **JE** suggested that the process of how the interaction between various committees would work needed to be documented. Draft to be agreed.

**AOEP/Trust/IDB**

- viii) It was agreed it was important to keep the words 'community partnership' near the top of the structure documents because this confers a certain status on us at national level, and this partnership has been seen as a beacon site of success for community partnerships.

- ix) It was suggested that the Strategic Board could be called the Community Board and the Technical Group could revert back to being called the Project Support Team. These suggestions will be discussed on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Reconstitution of the Estuary Trust**

- x) The Trust would like the Partnership to relinquish their 'share' in the Trust so that the Trust is managed completely independently. The Trust constitution would require amending however, as the Partnership is the sole member of The Trust, only the Partnership can agree to changes. Although the Trust has already sought lawyer's advice, the Partnership has **not** yet agreed to this change as this needs to be discussed by parish councils, AO Association trustees etc for their views, although **EG** thought that in principle this was a possibility.
- xi) **AA made** the point that today's discussion was about getting the right relationship between the Strategic Board and the IDB as the Board was responsible for the strategic management of the project should there be no funds or a catastrophic surge during works and a new direction was called for. However, there was nothing in the papers about the change of relationship between the Partnership as the member of the Trust and there was a concern that if the Trust were independent in years ahead Trustees could go down a divergent path. The Partnership needed to be fully informed of all the issues and it should be fully discussed. **JE** noted it was a complicated constitution at present, which was off putting to prospective trustees, but there could be a range of controls or letters of understanding between the Strategic Board and Trustees which might make joining as a trustee more appealing.

**JE**

**ACTION:** Awaiting responses from KSG, parish councils, Association. The Trust agreed that when/if required, a draft letter of instruction to redraft the constitution would be agreed by the Partnership before being sent to lawyers.

- xii) The draft programme was discussed and a date will be set for a September Strategic Board briefing once agreement had been reached on the structure and people to attend but the date of **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November (2pm venue to be agreed)** was provisionally set for the first Strategic Board Meeting.

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION GROUP REPORT

### i) Update on IDB draft business case submission

GB reported that the IDB had completed the assessments for the economics and that there had been further positive guidance from the Treasury on health & wellbeing and sense of place which was linked to the 25-year plan. Jacobs had completed the environment assessment and NE had agreed to send a letter of comfort supporting the business case. As there were protected species in Iken (avocets and marsh harriers) there needed to be a programme of stage 1 habitats assessments. Discussions were currently underway to decide if it was necessary to make a planning application. GB estimated he was 3 weeks away from submission to the EA, which was a month behind schedule. However, the second business case for the lower estuary should be less complicated as a considerable amount of the work (economics etc) has already been completed for the upper estuary business case which would still be relevant for the lower estuary. Climate change and sea level rise and consequent coastal squeeze could be an issue for the lower estuary but potentially work at Boyton could be re-engineered but any coastal squeeze issues were some way off.

### ii) EA/RFCC Annual Review - National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England

DK briefly discussed the RFCC annual review – where the EA go nationally in the next 5-30 years. The public consultation ends on 4<sup>th</sup> July. If you have views please ensure they are sent to the EA on : <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/fcrm/national-strategy-public/>

### iii) Draft response to EA Annual Review

AA explained that her draft response (as attached in the agenda papers) focused on AOEP views within the Alde and Ore estuary. The Estuary Plan already has a strategy of resilience and adaptation, but we need the money! AA also thought it would be worth mentioning the shingle engine for Aldeburgh under innovations so that it was not lost. Other Partnerships had agreed to confer on responses to get a common message. There will be an amends as below:

*“Flood defence is a public good. The strategy should be used as an opportunity to look at new, additional or less constrained methods of funding including contributions from developments. There should also be legislation facilitating particular local taxes, in particular, as well as a local Council Tax or levy, a visitors’ tax, in areas where tourism is a major part of the economy and managing flooding and erosion is in the interest of residents and visitors alike.*”

*The national budget should be increased to meet the £1billion a year needed in traditional and coastal defences to ensure that adaptation and resilience are built in positively and there are not simply projects patching over the cracks.”*

**It was agreed** the draft was supported by the Partnership and AA was asked to send it.

**Precept** – although some parishes had legal difficulties JMarson thought this was much more possible now with a new structure at East Suffolk Council and it would be

worthwhile discussing this further as 70% of the residents at Snape had supported an increase in the precept for flood defences. AA agreed to send to JM draft.

## 6. FUNDING GROUP REPORT

**The Flotilla** was 2/3rds full and sponsorships had covered the costs. Match funding of £20,000 had been obtained which was extra to Garfield Weston's £100,000 which is time limited to 2 years.

**Pub Quiz on 22<sup>nd</sup> November:** more sponsors are required – and group of people to match fund – If you would like to donate please discuss with Jane Maxim at the Estuary Trust.

There will be a Trust presence at the Aldeburgh Carnival and Orford Flower Show and TB suggested the Snape Village Fete on 3rd August.

JM also reported that there had been a preliminary meeting with the National Lottery Fund and also with the RSPB who now viewed the Estuary Plan more positively and were keen to collaborate with the HLF application as their Boyton applications was unsuccessful.

## 7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### Coastal Path

AA understood that NE would be talking to landowners until next spring, but NE had agreed to come to Snape Maltings on 17<sup>th</sup> July at 6.30 to explain progress so far and their future plans. It will be a presentation and questions evening.

## 8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2pm OTH**

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November** First Strategic Board Meeting 2pm venue to be agreed  
(provisional date)

28<sup>th</sup> June 2019/AJB