

ALDE AND ORE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

FINAL

MINUTES OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE ALDE AND ORE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

HELD ON THURSDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 6.30PM IN ORFORD TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Nominated representatives

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|---------------------------|---|
| Tim Beach (TB) Chairman | Cllr. Snape Parish Council |
| Andrew Reid (AR) | Cllr. Suffolk County Council |
| Jocelyn Bond (JB) | Cllr. East Coast Council (sub) |
| T-J Haworth-Culf (T-JH-C) | Cllr. East Coast Council |
| Christopher Lewis (CL) | Cllr. Aldeburgh Town Council (sub) |
| Richard Jesty | Cllr. Boyton Parish Council (sub) |
| Ben Coulter (BC) | Repr. Butley Capel St Andrew and Wantisden Parish Council |
| Peter McGinity (PMcG) | Chair Chillesford Parish meeting |
| Judi Hallett (JH) | Parish Clerk Hollesley |
| Frances Barnwell (FB) | Cllr. Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council |
| Andrew McDonald | Cllr. Sudbourne Parish Council (sub) |
| Niels Peterson (NP) | Cllr. Tunstall Parish Council |
| Alison Andrews (AA) | Alde and Ore Association |
| Edward Greenwell (EG) | IDB Board Member |
| Chris Gill (CG) | nominated as Treasurer |

ADVISERS/ATTENDEES:

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|---------------------|---|
| Brian Johnston (BJ) | Alde and Ore Estuary Trust (AOET) (sub) |
| David Kemp (DK) | Environment Agency (EA) |

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 4

AGENDA

1. Apologies:

Ray Herring ESC, Andrew Cassy Boyton PC, Colin Chamberlain Iken PC, David Robinson Sudbourne PC, Peter Palmer Aldeburgh TC, Jane Maxim AOET, Giles Bloomfield East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board (ESIDB), Ed Boyle Natural England (NE) Emma Cook ESIDB, Karen Thomas Coastal Partnership East, Harry Young Business Representative, Simon Amstutz Suffolk Coast and Heaths, Karry Langdon and Andy Palmer Cllrs Hollesley PC. (note Friston PC invited but no reply yet)

2. Declarations of interest

Representatives were asked to complete the Declaration of Interest Forms (an annual process).
(Please can those who have not done so, send them to the Hon Sec)

3. Minutes of the meeting on 30 January 2020

TB explained these were long but provided a great deal of helpful information at the start of the Community Partnership. Appreciation was expressed for the minutes. These were approved for signature subject to correcting the spelling of T-J Haworth-Culf's name and that Ben Coulter was a representative of Butley, Wantisden and Capel St Andrew Parish Council, not a Councillor.

4. Matters arising from the meeting on 30 January not otherwise on the agenda

- i. CG asked whether any further thought had been given to the name of the Community Partnership (CP), even reversing the name to Ore and Alde. While it was recognised that there were possible confusions with the other estuary focussed organisations, the consensus was to leave the AOCP's name as it was but to consider using strap lines to indicate the purpose of the CP of sustaining river walls/flood defences.
- ii. TB explained that efforts had been made to find a 'green' bank, which would provide the right sort of account for an organisation with expenditure as small as the CP's would be, but without success. An account needed to be set up soon and would have to be with one of the main clearing banks. Agreed.

iii. TB said that David Kemp (EA) had very helpfully found a source of money provided by the Regional Flood and Coast Committee via the District Council, of £10,150 to be divided between the Suffolk estuary partnerships. Coastal Partnership East was being prompted to make the claim before 31 March.

5. Communications

- a. **With whom and what** TB explained that he wanted this to be an open discussion with all ideas welcome to find the best routes and ensure 2 way communications.
 - i. In discussion, it was agreed that the basic starting point was what were the objectives of the communication and who would the audiences be and to find common messages, so identify stakeholders, and decide on the strapline (e.g. estuary needs the river defences to combat flooding).
 - ii. FB had circulated a paper setting out communication issues based on her discussions with ESIDB and the press officer of the AOETrust which helped prompt discussion. FB also said that ESIDB was clear that it had extensive requirements for communication with the local population and was focussed on minimising duplication and avoiding similar messages being repeated differently. Whilst recognising the key IDB role in areas where DB was actually working, it was commented that there was an important role for the AOCP to ensure that those areas not yet undergoing works by the IDB did not feel left out excluded an uninformed.
 - iii. It was agreed that there were several different stakeholder groups to be reached each needing different messages and at different frequencies. The groups of people to reach included the representatives to the AOCP themselves, their colleagues within councils to organisations, the local communities and within the communities those in flood cells where the IDB was undertaking works and those not yet subject to works. Another perspective was those directly affected by flooding but also the wider community and economy who would be adversely affected by flooding from the estuary, or those at minimal risk and those who would be heavily impacted, as well as those to whom the Trust could look to for contributions.
 - iv. There was the need to find common messages, to promote awareness and for some encourage giving money. In detail, there needed to be different messages, expressed in different ways: some stakeholders needed to be simply made aware, some needed to know more, so a map of all the different stakeholders was needed. Similarly some people might only want a newsletter once a year, others more frequently. Seeking professional advice to analyse the needs and prepare plans to meet them was advised and representatives were asked if anyone knew of a local person who might volunteer this.
 - v. It was also noted that it was important to find ways to get feedback as what the local community would find helpful to try and help encourage community engagement
 - vi. TB mentioned the RFCC were working to appraise flooding vulnerability of all parishes from Hunstanton to Purfleet (DK said that was 146 flood warning areas). There might be scope to include results from that in planning Alde and Ore communications.
 - vii. On the messages to be given and the methods used achieve communication, consideration was needed on what you want to impart, how you tell it. One method was to examine issues diagrammatically along one axis 'need to know- like to know' against another ranging between 'detail and big strategy'. There needed to be a rallying basic message with possibility of access to greater detail behind it for those who wanted it. One way to start to build a story might be to make a picture of what might happen if the river is not protected, the future without that protection. There were different ways of reaching people e.g. promote a school poster competition, which also reaches back into families
 - viii. Other considerations were there was good photo material to emphasise the message such as of the flooding at Snape in 2013 and a reminder that the flood defence work had a language and acronyms that made it very difficult for those not involved to understand, communications needed to bear that in mind. Also a distinction between flooding from the estuary and the recent floods for excessive rain on the lands needed to be kept clear. Questions and Answers would be helpful, such as -what is the plan? why do I need to know? where do I find out more? Information was needed about the estuary strategy generally and in detail from IDB when work was going on.

- ix. NP asked who has responsibility of the communications. TB responded that all in the AOCPC as stakeholders carried responsibility. Those in the DB and AOET also had their particular roles. BC felt that the role of the representatives on communications was to be a conduit back to the parishes and act as a sounding board. The need not to confuse audience with different bodies, to find a channel through which to push communications was advised.
- x. The importance of ensuring consistent messages from AOCPC, IDB and AOETrust was fully recognised but also that the AOCPC should be seen as an independent body not subsidiary to another.
- xi. Drawing together similar proposals made during the discussion, TB concluded that there was a consensus to form a small sub-group to develop a communications plan, mapping stakeholders, preparing a strap line, developing messages and segmented by the different audiences
- xii. **It was agreed** to set up a communications group to work out a plan for presentation to the Partnership at the end of May. The group would take into account all the suggestions offered during the meeting. Those wishing to join the group were asked to let TB or the Hon Sec know. (Volunteers at the time included FB, RH, and AA.) The group would also include Jane Maxim for the AOETrust and an ESIDB member to ensure the necessary coordination for those issues on which a similar message needed to be sent. The group would report back to the full AOCPC.

For the group, Hon Sec to provide a list of current communications. Interestingly, PMcG said that the Link circulated 900 copies of which 75% were by email.

b. Methods of communication

It was agreed that matters such as local, regional and a national press, social media, role of individuals could be addressed by the Communications Group.

c. Website

AA explained that to hold the line while decisions were taken, the domain for aocpc.co.uk had been found to be available, so had been registered for AOCPC by the website manager that had served AOEP so well. Herringbone Design had also provided some quotations for an AOCPC website ranging from what adjustments might be made to the AOEP website with a simple modest change in colour and amendment of the logo to a total make-over or new site. It was agreed to spend £60 on changing the colour and wording of the logo and £120 on website links between the former AOEP and new AOCPC domain, so giving time for the website issue to be revisited.

In discussion views were expressed of the need to maintain a degree of independence for AOCPC by having a separate AOCPC website from the Trust or IDB while some joining up to provide consistent messages was needed. The possibility of hub approach of the website of the three organisations with signposting between them was another possibility.

d. Meetings

- i. The best timing for meetings to engage the community was discussed. Views on when to start to tell the story ranged from don't start until the results of the Business Case consideration are available to start to tell the story from now, afresh.
- ii. To help discussion of timing, DK provided more background on when enough might be known about the result of the Business Case. Once the current exchanges between the EA Senior Economist and the consultancy firm RPA employed by IDB to ensure the application used the criteria for grant application correctly was completed, and this was in its closing stages, the Case would be submitted finally. While this had been a long process, getting it right at this stage should help ensure a quicker passage for the final consideration and assessment of the project on whether it was a good scheme meriting approval. This stage could take up to 13 weeks. Achieving that assessment did not carry any money with it. The Government funding for flooding was managed in 6 year tranches of £2.6 billion so no money was likely to be available until the new period beginning in April 2021. Possible good news was that the government manifesto had advocated that the next tranche for flooding would be increased to £4 billion but that might not be realised and, as all could see given the current major flooding across the country, the competition for grant would be strong. Work could start once approval to the scheme had been given, even if no government money was immediately forthcoming. Work was however limited by windows linked to bird and wild life breeding and wintering seasons and so could not take place throughout the year.

iii. Continuing the discussion it was recognised that fixing a date now for a public meeting was therefore difficult. There also the issue that, if the full grant request was not forthcoming, the AOCPP would need to rethink the plan in the light of the assessment of likely funding available. Time might be needed for that once EA had made a decision. A view put forward was that it was necessary to re-engage the communities, and that it was not necessary to wait for a final and complete answer, before having a meeting but to start to tell the story and then make sure updates were given to explain what was happening and why it was taking time. It was agreed that this issue needed further consideration.

iv. Meanwhile it was suggested that the annual parish meetings, mostly taking place in May, provided an opportunity to begin to provide information. Might perhaps material for a road show (of posters and information) be prepared - although the time to prepare much material was short, this could be considered

e. Link with AOETrust

It was noted that this would be initially addressed with the Trust in the Communications Group.

f. Links with Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council including CPE

AR said that SCC and DCs had agreed that the AOCPP was an outside body to which they lent tacit support without a communications role per se, but the Councils would help in pushing things forward. T-JH-C also added that the AOCPP could feed in news to go with the Councillors monthly and annual reports to Parish Councils. AR added when the money is decided, he had access to a third party funding unit which could promote the cause.

T-JH-C asked about contacts with the constituency MP Dr Therese Coffey. TB spoke about the very useful mini summit she had held with the major infra-structure holders on 6 September 2019 to secure their interest and engagement with the Estuary Plan. Karen Thomas, CPE, was leading on the follow-up action. AOCPP requested that KT came to the next meeting to provide an update on progress. DK said that another possibly useful way through was that Ofwat was looking at water companies' contributions to local communities and sustainability and so Anglian Water, via its Asset Management Plan, was looking for community schemes to which it could contribute, although he commented that it had very had taut spending windows. DK would send TB the contact.

6. Officers

i. **Treasurer** Chris Gill's appointment as Treasurer was unanimously approved.

ii. **Secretariat**- noted that no volunteer had come forward, AA would continue pro tem and that once finances has been secured the AOCPP could take stock of what might be paid.

7. Other business

Framework for AOCPP work. During the discussions, it was agreed to bring a draft constitution to the next meeting taking in the basic roles and tasks set out in the AOCPP Remit document.

High tides. DK reported that on Monday 10 February 2020 the high tide at Harwich was the third highest since the 1953 floods. Fortunately further up the coast on the Alde and Ore the tide had not been so extreme.

8. Date of Next meeting

All agreed a Thursday at 6.30pm suited most. A date to be found either side of the May half-term to receive the work from the Comms Group.

Agreed 11 June 2020