

Alde and Ore Community Partnership. Papers for first meeting

Paper 1

New Community Partnership for Alde-Ore Estuary Plan

Background

The Alde and Ore Estuary Plan was endorsed by all relevant authorities in 2016. This is to be implemented by ESIDB who are taking full responsibility for the EA approved programme of works ('Programme of Works') to implement the Estuary Plan subject to statutory monitoring by, and consents from, the EA. The ESIDB is a Flood Risk Management Authority and has submitted a draft outline business case to the EA to secure FDGiA funding. It is hoped this will be approved during 2020. The Programme of Works current projected costs are £26.9m. The Trust will continue to raise charitable funds and will give grants to ESIDB as funds permit to cover work not covered by available government funds. The ESIDB will apply for such government and non-charitable funding as may be available to help finance the Programme of Works.

Remit of the new group representing the community

The AOEP has now completed its initial function of producing the Estuary Plan and securing the means by which it is to be delivered. It is now proposed to form a new group (provisionally called the "Alde & Ore Community Partnership", AOCP) representing the community and acting as its voice in order to:

1. As **the guardian of the Estuary Plan**, consult with the community in conjunction with the ESIDB on any changes or adaptations of the Plan and Programme of Works that may be required, and decide on any significant alterations.
2. **Ensure community engagement** during the implementation of the Programme of Works and assist ESIDB in carrying out its communication plan. This includes holding its own meetings and supporting the ESIDB with their community relationships as necessary.

Potential tasks

The tasks of the new community partnership will evolve over time but may include:

- Considering reports, including on progress with the Programme of Works and fund raising from the IDB and the Trust.
- Supporting a communications and public engagement plan developed by ESIDB in co-operation with the AOCP on implementation and funding.
- Engaging with local people and businesses to ensure they have an opportunity for appropriate involvement
- Participating in the Suffolk Coast Forum and seeking support where appropriate
- Consulting with the community with the support and advice of the ESIDB on any significant changes required to the Estuary Plan and Programme of Works as a result of a change in circumstances.
- Ensuring the commissioning of expert reports or research as needed to advise on any changes required to the Estuary Plan or the Programme of Works or requested by ESIDB
- Ensuring that informal annual and formal 5 yearly reviews of the estuary habitat monitoring with NE, EA and others are held
- Ensuring the development and implementation of a saltmarsh strategy

- Ensuring that a long term maintenance programme for the river walls is developed and implemented
- Pressing for higher political engagement and support to protect the long term future of local and business communities, including commenting on government or other major body policies that might impact on the estuary
- Holding a public meeting for the community not less than once a year in cooperation with the ESIDB, in addition to normally holding AOCP meetings in public
- The Community Partnership may decide to set up sub-groups, including experts as required, to meet more frequently and/or a wider Stakeholder Group to take in interests such as the environment, agriculture or tourism.

Paper 2 Structure diagram: circulated separately

Paper 3

Framework for future relationship between the Alde and Ore Estuary Trust and the new community partnership (AOCP)

Background

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The Alde and Ore Estuary Trust

The main roles of the Trust are:

1. making grants to the ESIDB following grant applications from ESIDB to fund the Programme of Works, and
2. raising funds from the local Alde & Ore community and charitable foundations.

Tasks 1 and 2 above are the responsibility of the Trust. Applications for funds from other sources e.g. government and local authorities are likely to be made by the ESIDB with support from the Trust and the AOCP as appropriate.

The proposed new partnership representing the community (AOCP)

The Remit of the AOCP will be to represent the community and act as its voice in order to:

1. as the guardian of the Estuary Plan, consult with the community in conjunction with the ESIDB on any changes or adaptations of the Plan and Programme of Works that may be required, and decide on any significant alterations.
2. ensure community engagement during the implementation of the Programme of Works and assist ESIDB in carrying out its communication plan. This includes holding its own meetings and supporting the ESIDB with their community relationships as necessary.

Working practices

It will be helpful to have working practices in place to enable the Trust and the new community partnership (AOCP) to achieve a coherent message and consultation mechanism. These working practices may also involve ESIDB, will evolve over time and may include:

Coordination on communications to the public to ensure messages are consistent. This includes:

- a) agreement to exchange press notices, newsletters, material on figures and plans or other publicity material by either party before being made public,
- b) arranging for representatives of the Trust, AOCP and/or ESIDB to attend relevant meetings held by each of these organisations and arranging joint meetings, when appropriate to aid a coherent approach.

Provision of information from:

- a) the Trust to AOCF including provision of the Trust Annual report and accounts once signed off by its accountants, updates on funds held by the Trust twice a year, notification of grants made to the ESIDB, and any changes in the trustees or to the constitution of the Trust; and
- b) the AOCF to the Trust including changes to their elected representatives or advisers, and information about new sources of local grant funding of which it becomes aware.

Appointment of new Trustees in accordance with the letter from the Trust to AOEP dated [] including the Trust giving the AOCF advance notice of its intention to appoint a new trustee and in addition the opportunity to agree an AOCF representative who could participate in the appointment process.

Significant changes in the Programme of Works will require discussion and agreement between AOCF, ESIDB and the Trust to ensure (amongst other considerations) coherence of approach by these three parties, and that any proposed amended Programme of Works can be funded.

Charitable objects and name of the Trust will not be changed without prior discussion with AOCF.

This memorandum of understanding is not legally binding, is subject to amendment and will need to be discussed with AOCF when it has been formed.

December 2019

Paper 4

History of the Alde & Ore Estuary Partnership (AOEP), and its evolution into the Alde & Ore Community Partnership (AOCP)

December 2019

The Alde & Ore community's actions to preserve the flood defences in order to sustain the Estuary as a place to live, work and play have evolved, growing from the Suffolk Coastal District Council's 'Alde and Ore Futures' consultation in 2010.

The Alde & Ore Estuary Partnership was formed in May 2012 to provide an independent local voice in decision making about the management, upgrading and maintenance of the flood defences in the Alde & Ore Estuary. It was a pioneering local community venture responding to the fact that new government policy meant that the only way to achieve a 'whole estuary' approach was to develop a community plan, then to seek whatever government funding might be available and seek to raise the remaining funding requirement locally. In 2014 the AOEP established the Alde & Ore Estuary Trust to pursue funding from sources other than government ones.

Its first task was to produce a whole estuary strategy for flood defences and related community, landscape and environmental wellbeing. By mid-2016 the AOEP had produced such an estuary strategy and plan and undertaken a full public consultation. That Estuary Plan received endorsement as a document of material importance in planning matters from the relevant authorities, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and the Environment Agency's Regional Flood and Coast Committee.

The next two years involved extensive modelling of estuary flows to establish the best way to bring all the flood defences up to standard over some seven years, whilst avoiding any area being made any more vulnerable to a surge at any time. Once established, the work to take forward detailed plans and secure official approvals for the work was passed to the East Suffolk IDB to take forward.

Given this new phase, it was felt appropriate to recast the AOEP to produce a structure and remit that would be accountable, transparent and workable, keeping the local community closely involved but leaving the IDB in full charge of the actual work. The estuary community will remain as guardians of the Estuary Plan, and will monitor progress and decide on significant changes to the Plan as needed. The main aim was to make the partnership more transparent and democratic and to maintain the element of community ownership.

Extensive discussion carried on from the end of 2018. It was concluded that the AOEP should become more inclusive, with all eleven parishes with direct estuary frontages as members, rather than just the six who sit on the current AOEP. Also that the new AOCP should include one local member of the IDB board, one representative from the local business associations, and one from the Alde & Ore Association. Importantly, the addition of one County Councillor and two District Councillors was much favoured, integrating the work on the estuary with the higher tiers of local government.

Paper 5

ALDE & ORE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (AOCP) JANUARY 2020- relevant bodies

The bodies relevant to the work of the AOCP are:

- The **Alde & Ore Community Partnership**. The AOCP is the guardian of the Estuary Plan, and would need to agree to any significant alterations to it. Responsible for maintaining communication with the estuary community in conjunction with the IDB who are the project managers.
- The **Alde and Ore Estuary Trust** (The Trust) is responsible for raising and holding funds to fulfil the Estuary Plan through a charitable structure. It always has to keep in mind its independent status as a registered charity. It has ultimate responsibility for fund-raising.

The **Funding Group** set up by the Trust, is tasked with raising the funds needed to achieve the work set out in the Estuary Plan from all sources except for the Environment Agency and other government funds as applicable (the role of the IDB).

- The **East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board** (IDB) is a statutory body and a Flood Risk Management Authority (RMA) which will be carrying out the work to implement the Estuary Plan as Project Manager. In this role they will promote the scheme through the Environment Agency's Regional Flood and Coast Committee (RFCC), submit Business Cases and seek national (FDGIA) and Local Levy funding for the project. The IDB will carry out local communications and consultation throughout the duration of the project in cooperation with the AOCP. It will write specifications, seek tenders, engage contractors, ensure completion, and certify the work. An IDB board member is a voting member of the AOCP.

The **IDB Alde-Ore Landowners Group** is a non-statutory group comprising all IDB rate-paying landowners around the Alde-Ore Estuary. This group is providing liquidity to enable work to continue while the Trust raises funds.

- The **Environment Agency** (EA) The technical lead regarding people and property at flood risk/Lead authority regarding emergency works on the coast and estuary/Lead authority regarding intertidal habitat creation funding opportunities/Grant submission advisor/Data collection/Technical reviewers/Promoters of the Estuary Plan through the **RFCC** (Regional Flood and Coastal Committee). The EA is the statutory body and Flood Risk Management Authority responsible for issuing Flood Defence Activity Permits (FRAP) and facilitating FDGiA funds and RFCC Local Levy funding. The RFCC endorsed the Estuary Plan in April 2016.
- **Natural England** (NE) The technical lead regarding existing SSSI and environmental aspects of scheme proposals in relation to habitat and species/Lead advisors on Habitats Regulations Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessments for any proposed scheme/Lead advisors on Stewardship payments for intertidal habitat creation projects/Promoters of the scheme through the RFCC.
- **East Suffolk Council (ESC)** Lead planning authority regarding coastal planning matters.
- **Suffolk County Council (SCC)** Lead Flood Authority for the County. Runs the Suffolk Coast Forum, on which the AOCP has a seat.
- **Coastal Partnership East (CPE)** brings together the coastal management resources and expertise from Great Yarmouth Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council, and **East Suffolk Council**. **CPE** works in partnership with the Environment Agency, the Water

Management Alliance, **coast** and estuary community partnerships and others along the 173 km of coast in Norfolk and Suffolk in relation to coastal and flood strategy and related works.

- **Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Unit** Located with ESC, responsible for the protection of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- **The Alde & Ore Association** A Charitable Incorporated Organisation Trust, with a membership of some 2000, set up over 25 years ago to preserve the Alde and Ore Estuary. A representative is a voting member of AOCP and represents the Association and a broad range of river users.
- The **Aldeburgh** and **Orford Business Associations** are jointly appointing a business representative to the AOCP to represent local businesses around the estuary.

16 January 2020

Paper 6

ALDE AND ORE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

FINANCE

The purpose of this paper is to explain what expenditure the Community Partnership might incur and what funds are available. (Copies of the AOEP accounts up to 29 January 2020 are available if wanted- the following is a summary)

1. The Alde and Ore Community Partnership, like its predecessor the Estuary Partnership, will have limited expenditure.
2. **Current total funds** :The Accounts for the last period of the AOEP running until end 29 January 2020, with many thanks to Chris Gill volunteer for preparing these, show the following:

-on the basis that the remaining funds of the AOEP are to be passed on to the AOCP, currently **unrestricted funds**, which may be spent on any AOCP business, **stand at £6,026**. (that said, signatories for Community Partnership cheques need to be identified and a method to be negotiated of transferring funds from the former AOEP account to a new account, possibly at a different bank, must be worked out)

- there are £7,644 held in restricted accounts, mainly for Business and Saltings projects.

3. **Source of funds**: A grant of £2500 was paid to each of the estuary partnerships for four years 2016-2019, but in late in 2019 Suffolk Coast and District Council/ East Coast Council acknowledged that funding has been dropped. Staff in Coastal Partnership East say that when staff resources are available a budget case will be made to renew the estuary groups funding. Meanwhile the AOCP, like the Deben Partnership and others, have only the funds remaining in their accounts with no other source in sight. For likely expenditure in the coming year there should be sufficient funds available unless a voluntary secretary cannot be found.

Action

4. i) The Partnership is recommended to work with the Deben Partnership and other estuary partnerships to seek to secure a regular administration grant.
ii) volunteer needed to manage the AOCP finance.

BACKGROUND DETAILS

The matters for which funding may be required

--Hire of venue for meetings (note that the Orford Town Hall kindly provide their meeting room and hall for free, Snape Maltings have also been generous) This expenditure only arises where other venues are called upon – possibly £100-150 a year.

- Communications- essentially conducted by email but sometimes the local new publications require payment for special advertisements/notices.

- Publications- formerly hard copies of newsletters now sent by email. In 2019, publicity, copywriting, design and website saw expenditure of £1500 (including a £50 a month regular fee to the website firm) The new AOCP will need to review communications policy.

- Equipment for meetings such as posters –unknown- what is needed will depend on what meetings/ communications the AOCP chooses to set up, but generally most events can use power point and avoid publications.

- Funding of research projects- infrequent expenditure. Between 2012 and 2019 AOEP spent £2,178 on such work but nothing since end 2016. E.g. in 2016 the AOEP contributed, along with other estuary bodies, to the Natural England saltings survey.

-Saltings projects- the AOEP secured funds to undertake renewal and defences projects of saltings. After work undertaken, £5,332 remains in restricted funds. Work halted during 2018-19 while an application for permission for a project was being considered by the Marine Management Organisation but eventually the Environment Agency withdrew the request because of MMO delay took the project out of time for EA funding. Nevertheless, the Partnership can attend the Suffolk Saltmarsh Group and more pilots may emerge if the volunteers can be found to run it. Also the Monitoring Group of the Partnership (commitment for 5 yearly reports in relation to monitoring coastal squeeze) have undertaken to provide regular monitoring of the projects so far, as part of the evidence relating to the state of the estuary. (The monitoring is about to start again as the previous volunteers can no longer do the work.)

-Business Support: £1,443 remains in restricted fund from BIZ funding to support partnerships and can be used to contribute about one third of expenditure to help businesses in relation to river matters, such as publicity.

- A residual amount of £868 remains in restricted funds allocated to enabling development. This is no longer on the table having been formally abandoned as a funding source.

A. Andrews
Temporary Hon Sec

26 January 2020