

ALDE AND ORE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Final agreed minutes

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

HELD ON THURSDAY 11 JUNE 2020 AT 6.30PM BY ZOOM

PRESENT: Nominated representatives

Tim Beach (TB) Chairman	Cllr. Snape Parish Council
Ray Herring	Cllr. East Coast Council
Andrew Cassy	Cllr. Boyton PC
Ben Coulter (BC)	Repr. Butley, Capel St Andrew and Wantisden Parish Council
Peter McGinity (PMcG)	Chair Chillesford Parish Meeting
Colin Chamberlain	Cllr. Iken PC (latter part of meeting)
Frances Barnwell (FB)	Cllr. Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council
Andrew McDonald (AMcD)	Cllr. Sudbourne Parish Council (sub)
Alison Andrews (AA)	Alde and Ore Association
Edward Greenwell (EG)	IDB Board Member
Harry Young (HY)	Business Representative
Chris Gill (CG)	Treasurer

ADVISERS/ATTENDEES:

Giles Bloomfield	East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board (ESIDB)
David Kemp (DK)	Environment Agency (EA)
Ed Boyle	Natural England (NE)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 5

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies:** Andrew Reid Cllr. Suffolk County Council, T-J Haworth-Culf, Cllr. East Coast Council, Peter Palmer Cllr. Aldeburgh TC, Judi Hallett Parish Clerk Hollesley, David Robinson Cllr. Sudbourne PC, Niels Peterson Cllr Tunstall Parish Council, Jane Skepper IDB alt, Jane Maxim/Emma Lloyd AOET, Karen Thomas Coastal Partnership East
- 2. Declarations of interest**
No new declarations of interest were made. About four attendees still had to complete their Declaration of Interest Forms (an annual process) but none were present.
- 3. Minutes of the meeting on 27 February 2020**
These were agreed without amendment.
- 4. Matters arising from the meeting on 30 January 2020 not otherwise on the agenda**
 - i. Website:** TB said that the AOEP website had been adapted and adopted by the AOCP (domain name now AOCP) using the £150 authorised at the last meeting. It was recognised that it does what is necessary but could be enhanced: consideration of this falls to the Comms Group.
 - ii. Finance:** COVID 19 restrictions had limited any action in setting up a bank account. It was agreed that one would be set up with the Coop, a small ethical bank, once a constitution had been agreed. It was also agreed that there should be three signatories with two signing at any one time: the signatories would be the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. Noted that about £600 had been spent since November, largely on website upkeep and some changes.
- 5. IDB update on the Outline Business Case submission.**
GB reported that the final Outline Business Case for the Upper Estuary, submitted on 27 April, had already been signed off by the EA area team and sent for the final stage of consideration by the National Project Assurance Service (NPAS). DK said that the NPAS had become more positive and some searching questions

would be arriving with ESIDB this week. Provided that these could be dealt with quickly, there was a real chance there could be a decision by the end of July. It still remained the case that even if its approval was successful, there might not be any grant aid until 2021. GB added that, as there were other monies coming available too, it might still be possible work might commence earlier before the grant aid came in. TB said that the Partnership welcomed this positive report but recognised nothing could be counted on yet.

6. **Communications- Report back from AOCF Comms Group. (Paper 1)**

TB introduced the paper setting out a Draft Communication Strategy which the AOCF Comms Group, chaired by FB and led by AMcD had prepared: it was a comprehensive document, covering all the points made by the Partnership recorded in the minutes of the meeting on 27 February and included input from AOET and IDB.

AMcD thanked all the team members for a large piece of work in difficult circumstances. There was more to be done including shortening and he invited all to send in comments as PMcG had done. It was more a statement of principle and the next stage would be to decide how to actually activate and take forward the communication plans and contacts so that a start could be made in acquiring the support of the community. Practically it came down to who are we talking to, tone of voice and how we listen and assessing how well we have done in achieving those. We needed to find out who had the time, energy and skills and the resources to do the work. He invited comments, including contributions to complete the returns from parishes on what communications were already available so that a final document could be produced.

TB agreed that with news that result of the OBC application might be available within less than two months, we needed to be agile and ready with plans. He invited AMcD to continue leading the Comms Group, invited others not already in the group to join, and said that everyone in the Partnership would be committed and help with the messaging. AMcD added a key channel for week to week messaging would be the website. Volunteer helpers and D. Gillingwater who ran the website would be involved. TB also mentioned Parish Clerks who carried very broad and constantly urgent workloads needed to be brought in.

Conclusion: Document to be completed with contributions from all and Comms team to take forward identifying the practical steps and how to activate them and report back to the Partnership.

7. **Alde and Ore Estuary Plan –Monitoring and review Strategy : Discussion (Paper 2)**

AA introduced the issue. An essential part of securing official endorsement of the Estuary Plan in 2016 had been to set up a monitoring and review strategy with the statutory bodies to provide clear benchmark data to enable assessment of the impact of coastal squeeze over the years and to review the data every five years with a view to taking mitigatory action should coastal squeeze be found to be having an impact. A Working Group had been set up involving representatives of the AOEP, EA, NE, Suffolk County Council and IDB with other experts being called on for data. The Group had agreed the mode of working to suit the requirements. The AOEP had received annual reports on the work of the group and in 2020 a report was due setting out data collected and available and would act as a benchmark for future years, as apart from a middle section of the Aldeburgh wall, construction of the estuary's planned refurbished walls had not yet started. More details were set out in Appendix 7 of the Estuary Plan.

GB explained that the IDB had undertaken to deliver the construction of the estuary walls but the commitment in the Plan extended many years beyond that. The Partnership and IDB would benefit from exploring further the implications of the Strategy and commitments linked to it.

As this was a significant exercise the Chairman concluded that **it was agreed that** the new Partnership would review that commitment given that we had been doing it for a number of years and to explore all issues to understand what was involved, what were the potential risks, or potential obligations and who they would fall on to deliver, how data would be projected forward and so take a view on how matters in the many years ahead might need to be handled. He asked for volunteers to join a smaller group to go into this. EA and NE were also content to participate in this fresh look. (CPE who were very supportive of the work would be asked.) (Volunteers AA, FB, DK, EB, EG, AC, PMcG)

8. **Constitution- discussion of draft AOCF constitution (Paper 3)**

- i. FB had prepared a draft constitution seeking to keep it as readable and simple as possible and making clear the need to engage and have the full support of the community. She said there were a few typing glitches and a reference to Chillesford having a Parish Meeting instead of a Council to be changed in the draft, but comments were invited. The meeting agreed that the general layout was helpful.
- ii. It was asked in relation to draft para (E.d.) covering the activities not included in the programme of works, what were the actions that the Partnership can and can't influence? FB said that not all the roles set out in the

Plan came within the scope of the IDB delivering the construction of the estuary defences, such as saltmarshes and monitoring. She was anxious to make sure that the Partnership was not committed beyond what it might do, as a community organisation, but the draft needed flexibility to carry out tasks related to the Plan.

iii. The size of the quorum was discussed. It was agreed that 8 out of the 17 representatives would be suitable for normal work but that could be looked at further. However, for the major issue of changing the constitution, (Section L) the suggested draft 'two thirds majority of representatives present and voting' could result in only a very small number taking the decision: it was concluded that a bare or absolute majority of all representatives would be more appropriate.

iv. There followed a discussion as to whether the draft as it stood expressed sufficiently the Partnership's leading role in relation to the Estuary Plan. It was put forward that the Partnership was the owner of the Strategy Plan in the sense that the IDB had the task of delivering the project but that, should major changes be made or significantly different circumstances arise, the Partnership had the lead role to ensure the principles of the Plan were adhered to or reviewed. It was further suggested that the ownership of the Plan was an all-encompassing element of the Partnership because, while the IDB project was focussed on flood and environmental factors, there was no reference to the economy and local businesses which the Plan was to serve. There was also a distinction between the Estuary Plan and its fundamental strategy in terms of flood defence and the flood cells, and the IDB's implementation of the Project which the Community Partnership should not influence: the Plan was the community's plan and the AOC was the community's voice. Were a fundamental change needed to the Plan, and if the AOC did not have a duty to approve significant changes, who did? On the other hand, it was noted that the draft Objectives stated the role of guardianship, was this not wide enough? Also, since in practice everything would have to be done in consultation, the draft which sought to make the document an enabling one for this purpose, not a restricting one, covered the concerns. But, while accepting that any changes would require wide consultation, it was suggested that it was for the Community Partnership to be the point for approving or disapproving major changes, so the Objectives might include 'to approve significant changes to the Plan'. In addition, it was said that for consultations to take place, there needed to be the driver to make that happen and that driver should be the Partnership but that was not yet clear in the draft:

v. The Chairman thought that the Partnership was already showing that it was the driver and had to work as best as it could in the contexts available. He concluded that final drafting was not going to happen in the meeting and invited suggested texts from all who wished to provide them with a view to a final text hopefully being completed within the next two weeks, hopefully by email.

9. Report from AOET: TB reported that they felt there was nothing they wanted to say at present.

10. Any other business: None

8. Dates of Next meetings

Unless the results of the Outline Business Case application required an earlier, the next meeting would be on Thursday 10 or 17 September at 6.30pm, either by Zoom or at Orford Town Hall

The December meeting would be on 3 or 10 December. . **Preferences were invited.**

AA

25.6.2020