

Minutes of Meeting held on 21 June 2023 Deben Room East Suffolk House



In attendance:

DB	Cllr	David	Beavan	Chair		AR		Adam	Rowlands	RSPB
AS		Alysha	Stockman	CPE		SA		Simon	Amstutz	SCH AONB
SJB		Sharon	Bleese	CPE		KM		Keith	Martin	SCAR
MF		Madeline	Fallon	CPE		KT		Karen	Thomas	CPE
JG		Julian	Gregory	EIFCA		SLB		Sara	Barratt	CPE
TB		Tim	Beach	AOCP		JC		James	Cochrane	CPE
DK		David	Kemp	EA		SR		Sharon	Richardson	CPE
RS		Richard	Steward	BEP		CKR		Charles	Krolik-Root	CPE
AA		Alison	Andrews	AOA		TAR		Trazar	Astley-Reid	CPE
RW		Robin	Whittle	RDA		TC		Tom	Chalker	CPE
LF		Louise	Feavyour	MMO						

Apologies: Rob Wise (NFU), Vanessa Gouldsmith (NE), Mark Johnson (EA), Cllr Jan Candy (ESC), Simon Odell (NE), Jon-Paul Farthing (CPE), Ian Bradbury (BEP), Lisa Mills (CPE), Tamzen Pope (CPE), Philip Ridley (ESC), Jaap Flikweert (RFCC)

1.	Welcome and introductions	SJB shared a round of introductions.
2.	Election of Chair and Vice Chair	SJB shared that DB has been nominated by email and asked if there were any other nominations. No further nominations received. KM proposed DB as Chair and Richard Steward seconded. DB elected as Chair.
3.	Agree Revised Terms of Reference	SJB and AS have gone through the Terms of Reference and made some amendments around the reference to initiatives in 2012 when this Forum was formed. SJB shared that the Terms of Reference largely remain the same but are more streamlined and make it easier to see what the Forum is trying to achieve. These need to be ratified by the Forum. JG noted that most of the Suffolk coast has a designation as a Marine Protected Area but the mention of conservation and environment seemed light. SJB asked where JG would like that to be included. JG agreed to review and make a suggestion. SJB suggested amending the Terms of Reference and voting on it by email. The Chair agreed. DK asked what the status of the Stour and Orwell estuaries which lie beyond Landguard Point and SMP7 is. KT suggest they fall into the Essex SMP frontage and therefore not Suffolk Coast Forum. DK added that it needs to be made clear in the Terms of Reference. SJB agreed and added that there is representation on this Forum from Babergh District Council. SA added the AONB has traditionally facilitated the Stour and Orwell group and reported back into this Forum and SA is content for that arrangement to continue.

		<p>AA asked that saltmarsh be included in the mention of environment. SJB added that the problem previously was that the Terms of Reference were made too specific. KT suggested using nature based solutions to cover a range of things including saltmarshes, sand dunes, mudflats, and cliff erosion.</p> <p>TB noted that the Terms of Reference say the Forum needs to elect a vice chair. SJB shared that there were no nominations for vice chair and asked for nominations. No nominations were received. SJB suggested that the Forum can proceed without the vice chair. Nominations are welcome. The Chair agreed to defer this to the next meeting.</p> <p>The Forum voted in favour of amending and agreeing the Terms of Reference by email.</p> <p>ACTION: JG to review Terms of Reference and suggest where further mention of conservation and the environment would fit in</p>
4.	East Anglia Coastal Group Chair Update	<p>KT took over Chair of the East Anglia Coastal Group last year from Mark Johnson. KT introduced the National Coastal Group Network and explained the role of the East Anglia Coastal Group. The website (https://www.eastangliacoastalgroup.org/) will become a good place to see how Shoreline Management Plans will be delivered. KT highlighted that climate change is at the heart of decisions and driving most of the team's challenges and opportunities with regards to funding.</p> <p>KT shared that following significant economic challenges and difficulty to deliver the national capital programme, the Group have gathered information on local projects and fed that back nationally to discuss how things might change or be managed by the Environment Agency and Defra. A recent example is inflationary notes and guidance received which has also released more money into projects.</p> <p>KT gave an overview of work on the Suffolk coast including a mini coastal strategy in Southwold, ongoing discussions with the community and a neighbourhood plan in Thorpeness, and buying time in Pakefield where there are complex coastal processes.</p> <p>The Lowestoft Tidal Barrier is in the design phase and the Project is going through the Transport and Works Act Order process currently. The social value provided by the Project is now over £6million.</p> <p>SA asked where there is more information on the social value. KT suggested running a lunch and learn session through Balfour Beatty.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the £6million has been achieved or is hoped to be. KT confirmed the £6million has been achieved. This includes supply chain, work with schools, and apprentices.</p> <p>SJB encouraged the Forum to share World Drowning Prevention Day which happens on 25th July. 30% of drownings in the UK happen on the coast, 83% of those are male and there is an increase with the increase of paddleboarding. The RNLI have launched the Float to Live campaign, which was an effective</p>

		<p>campaign last year and SJB asked the Forum to promote and support this campaign. SJB added one of the things raised at the last All Party Parliamentary Group meeting was that there are 70-100 independent lifeboat stations across the UK but nobody has a plan for coastal change or coastal erosion at the moment. SJB is working through the LGA Coastal SIG with the UK Search and Rescue Board to raise and deal with the issue in terms of the support for life saving.</p> <p>ACTION: CPE to organise a lunch and learn session on social value</p>
5.	East Coast Wetlands	<p>AR shared that the East Coast Flyway has been accepted onto the tentative list as a UNESCO Potential World Heritage Site. It extends from the Humber Estuary to the Thames and is a Natural World Heritage Site bid. There are 10 criteria to become a World Heritage Site (six for Cultural Sites and four for Natural Sites) this bid was submitted under criterion (x). The team have been encouraged to include the aspects of criterion (ix) as well.</p> <p>AR explained that flyways represent the migration routes of waders and waterfowl. There are eight global flyways and this bid is part of the East Atlantic Flyway stretching from the southern tip of South Africa to the Greenland and Canadian Arctic and across to Siberia.</p> <p>The application was submitted as a partnership and the report was prepared by ABPmer. The Independent Panel recommended the bid should be accepted onto the tentative list and suggested considering buffer zones. The concept is to think about how coastal locations can adapt in the future rather than trying to protect them all in situ, so there is a need to identify and anticipate change and work with change process to make sure this wetland interest can be accommodated on a changing coast.</p> <p>The process will now be led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, who will develop the nomination and work with local authorities, communities, and other stakeholders across the 21 interconnected wetlands to develop the single globally important site. This is not another layer of legal protection.</p> <p>CKR asked if it were to be designated as a World Heritage Site, could it be undesignated and if there is any monitoring needed or things to fulfil. In practice that will serve as some level of protection for those 21 sites. AR confirmed there is a process of monitoring and review to demonstrate that the Outstanding Universal Value is being maintained and if UNSECO deem this has not been maintained they can undesignated the site.</p> <p>KT asked around adaptation of communities within that zone, if there are any opportunities to strengthen the bid and work on closely together. AR agreed and added the World Heritage Site status recognises that it has to be part of the functioning coastline for people. TB added that there have been some early discussions on how this could work on the lower estuary of the Alde.</p> <p>The Chair asked if this is about saline or freshwater wetlands. AR confirmed it is a combination.</p> <p>TAR asked what the best way to get in touch with RSPB regarding Resilient Coasts is. AR confirmed through the Programme Manage but AR can take away the comments from this meeting.</p>

		<p>JG asked if there would be potential for further designations. AR added that with the changing coast, how protected areas move spatially will need to be thought about differently.</p> <p>SA asked if AR is working on political support. AR agreed and added that as the Government are making that commitment to international treaty, usually this would transfer to the next administration. There will be an opportunity for advocacy.</p>
6.	Resilient Coasts	<p>CKR has recently taken the role as Coastal Manager at Coastal Partnership East. The situation currently is quite reactive and the team is working towards planning for change along the coast. The Resilient Coasts project aims to achieve this by giving people a toolkit of options to help them with this transition.</p> <p>Resilient Coasts has £8.4million in funding and covers Great Yarmouth and East Suffolk, with the pilot sites in Suffolk being Thorpeness, Pakefield, Southwold, Lowestoft, Corton and Gunton, and Shotley. There are eight work packages, which will all feed into coastal adaptation plans.</p> <p>Work Packages 1 and 2 are both mapping based looking at what the risk is along the frontages and what is actually at risk. The National and Coastal Erosion Risk Mapping should provide some of this data and CPE's Senior Coastal Advisors have fed into this. CPE are looking into what can be gathered from the Ordnance Survey on the built environment and will be speaking to infrastructure providers about buried infrastructure.</p> <p>Work Package 3 is an adaptation funding mechanism to develop new funding and finance for communities, businesses, nature, and individuals facing coastal change. CPE are exploring a seed fund to enable partnership funding.</p> <p>Work Package 5 is an integrated investment plan to look at who might be investing around the coast, for example, utility providers protecting an asset but doing that in isolation and not looking at whether the properties served are also at risk and not going to be there long-term.</p> <p>Work Package 4 is enabling conversations through co-created engagement resources for communities and practitioners. It is about communities having ownership over the situation and having the control and ability to make those decisions. CPE have been carrying out readiness assessments for each of the pilot sites to understand where they are in terms of adaptation so that this can be measured throughout the project.</p> <p>Work Package 6 is the coastal adaptation plans, which combines all the pieces of work from the other work packages and is presented to the pilot communities. What the plan looks like depends on the community and how they want to use it.</p> <p>WP7 is looking at policy change and this project has a conduit through to Government to influence policy. CKR understands that the other Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Projects are thinking similarly to CPE and there will be a lot of pressure through these projects for change.</p> <p>WP8 is a costed asset management plan centred around engineering and existing assets on the coast, including understandings their lifecycle, community views, removal, and recycling. CPE are looking into a rock pipeline to buy time for communities and then move the material to another location. There may be</p>

		alternatives that come through the call to action that the Resilient Coasts team have put out.
7.	2023 Conference	<p>SJB shared that this year's conference will be held on 12th October at Wherstead Park and so far there are 99 people booked in person and 34 virtually. The conference will be livestreamed, the venue can take up to 250 people in person, and there will be an exhibition area. SJB shared the draft programme with the Forum.</p> <p>This year Essex Coast Forum are joining the conference, making it the first East Anglian Coast and Estuaries Conference and is also being held in the backdrop of the Year of the Coast. The new logo is in development and will be shared with the Forum to have their input.</p> <p>SJB asked for nominations for the Sue Allen Memorial Awards and Balfour Beatty Rising Star Award to be sent to AS.</p> <p>Through work with the LGA Coastal Special Interest Group and Coastal Partnerships Network, SJB came up with the postcard for the coast initiative. This is pledges around the country of what people personally can do for the coast. The intention is to contact people in six months' time to see how they are getting on with their pledge.</p> <p>AA noted that regarding the Sue Allen awards, one is for volunteers, and one is for practitioners. SJB agreed and added that the practitioners are wider than Risk Management Authorities.</p> <p>SA added that the AONB will share the call for nominations on social media if they are tagged and asked if there will be a shuttle bus from Ipswich Station. SJB confirmed there will be a shuttle bus.</p>
8.	National Environment Agency Update	<p>DK informed the Forum that the Environment Agency's Chief Executive, Sir James Bevan, retired in March 2023 and will be replaced on 1st July by Philip Duffy, currently Director General Growth and Productivity HM Treasury. John Curtin has been acting Chief Executive in the interim.</p> <p>Regarding the SMP Refresh and SMP Explorer, the action plans will be frozen in October so that the SMP Explorer can come in as planned in December.</p> <p>The Environment Agency have completed the £2.1m project at Felixstowe Ferry and have been doing maintenance work in the estuaries over the past three years including in the Blyth, Aldeburgh Town Marsh, the Alde, and the Deben at Melton, leading to the Stour and Orwell soon.</p>
9.	Updates from Partners	<p>TB shared the money has been received for the Alde and Ore upper estuary. There was discussion about codes of conduct on the river relating specifically to the Alde and Ore and that has the potential to grow across the estuaries. It fits in with the RSPB wetland corridor and the AOCF are going to pursue that as far as they can. TB spoke with East Suffolk Council's RAMS Officer who has funding set aside for reducing the impact of recreation.</p> <p>The Chair asked if this is about jet skis. TB added it is not just jet skis, it includes people on paddle boards and disturbing birds. It is not about enforcement but about education, leafleting, and potentially having wardens or rangers. It is quite a big piece of work that could be done together and TB suggested it as a future agenda item.</p>

		<p>SJB asked if it is something that is likely to be broader than the Forum. SJB, through the Beach and Water Safety Group, has pursued legislation on jet skis and managed to get the Department for Transport to look at the legislation around jet skis. They have not introduced the new bill suggested as they need to work out who would enforce it and how that could be resourced. Paddle boards have also been raised and SJB is happy to take something to the All Party Parliamentary Group to see what can be pushed forward.</p> <p>TB added that part of the work being discussed with Suffolk Wildlife Trust was looking at if there is an evidence base to show that it has an impact and then what can be done about it.</p> <p>SJB can help nationally if that support is needed.</p> <p>TB agreed.</p> <p>JG added it is not just activities involving watercraft, for example, bait digging has been an issue or any foreshore activity can cause disturbance.</p> <p>SA shared that the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB management plan is out for public consultation and there is still opportunity to comment.</p>
10.	Suggested agenda items for future meetings - discussion	<p>The Chair noted TB's suggestion from the previous item.</p> <p>SA noted the reference to RAMS and added there are some interesting things coming out of that which could be presented on. SA suggested an update on the England Coast Path and deep dives in individual organisation's work.</p> <p>AA shared that the Deben, Alde and Ore have started doing water monitoring and asked if there is something to be brought together on water monitoring for E. coli and nitrates and whether that needs to come into all of the estuaries. The Chair agreed to support for the Blyth.</p> <p>JG added that where there are shellfish beds, the local authority is responsible for water monitoring.</p> <p>AA noted that in Butley there is an oysterage which is regularly tested. AA suggested the Forum would be a good place to join the water monitoring together.</p> <p>SA shared that the Dedham Vale AONB have a Community Science on Water Quality speaker at its forum in September.</p> <p>LF shared that the East Marine Plan is coming up for refresh and would be happy to share more about the marine plans and find out what the Forum want from the MMO at a future meeting.</p>
11.	Previous minutes	The Forum approved the minutes from the previous meeting.
12.	Any Other Business	LF shared that the MMO have monitoring surveys out at the moment to find out how people are using and understanding the marine plans, which will feed into the refresh. LF asked the Forum to complete the survey.