

Exe Estuary Management Partnership Management Group Minutes

10:00 – 12:00 Friday 1 December 2017

Location: Darts Farm Village, Topsham, Clyst St George, Exeter
EX3 0QH



Present:

Representatives

Devon County Council:

Teignbridge District Council:

Exeter City Council:

Dawlish Town Council:

Starcross Parish Council:

Woodbury Parish Council:

Bishops Clyst Parish Council:

Forum Chair:

Forum Vice Chair:

RSPB:

Natural England:

RYA:

Powderham Estate:

Devon & Severn IFCA:

Exe Estuary Officer:

Minute Taker:

Chair: Councillor Jeffrey Trail BEM (JT)

Graeme Smith (GS)

Cllr Margaret Baldwin MBE (MB)

Colin Acton (CA)

Cllr Terry Lowther (TL)

Cllr Andrew Cadbury (AC)

Cllr Graham Murrin (GM)

Cllr Christopher Scanes (CS)

Neil Downes (ND)

Lynn Trout (LT)

Gavin Bloomfield (GB)

Andrew Stanger (AS)

Alan Wood (AW)

Tim Faulkner (TF)

Steph Davies (SD)

Stephanie Clark (SC)

Rowena Garne (RG)

Substitutes

Devon County Council: Lesley Garlick (LG)

Teignbridge District Council: Cllr Humphrey Clemens (HC)

Specialist Advisors

South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership (SEDHRP): Neil Harris (NH)

Devon & Severn IFCA: Sarah Clark (SaC)

Invited Parties

Exmouth Mussels: Myles Blood-Smyth (MBS)

RYA: Dave Curno (DC)

Port User Group / Exmouth Water Users Group / Exe Sailing Club: Rex Frost (RF)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence – JT

- Apologies for absence: Cllr Ted Hockin (Vice Chair / TDC); Cllr Michael Howe (EDDC); Cllr Maureen Ackland-Smith (Clyst St George PC); Cllr Pat A Graham MBE (ETC); Peter Chamberlain (DCC); Lord Charles Courtenay (Powderham Estate); James Chubb (EDDC); Peter Thorn (British Canoeing); Hugh Davey (EA)

Councillor Pat A Graham MBE

For personal reasons Councillor Pat Graham MBE has written a letter of resignation to the chairman to become effective from 31st December 2017.

Pat was elected in 1997 and has served Exmouth Town as a Ward, Town and District Councillor for the past 20 years.

Over this period Pat has well and truly put Exmouth on the map, especially with her sterling work as President of Exmouth in Bloom, for which Pat was awarded the MBE in 2015.

During her time on the Town Council Pat was elected as Town Mayor and served on numerous committees within the Town and District councils.

Pat has always put the community of Exmouth first. She is a courteous, reliable and well-respected member of Exmouth Town Council and the Exe Estuary Management Partnership.

Pat, your service to the Exe Estuary Management Partnership will be sorely missed and on behalf of the partnership, I would like to thank you for your commitment, time, patience and support.

Councillor Jeff Trail BEM

2. Minutes and Action Log of Previous Meeting – JT

- See Action Log for details.
- JT has sent out letters to 19 councillors for locality budgets, have received 4 responses so far.
- The MG were reminded that continued contributions and support is essential to the viability of the EEMP next financial year.
- Two sailing clubs could possibly be used for future meeting venues.
- Minutes from previous MG meeting were agreed as accurate record.

3. Budget Monitoring 2017-18 and Budget Preparation 2018-19 – LG**2017-18**

- Expenditure – our total expenditure for 2017-18 will be £46,959, we had a budget of £53,422. This leaves us with an underspend of approximately £7,603 which will be carried forward to next year. This was a planned underspend to help with the funding gap in 2018-19.
- All contributions from funding partners have been received.
- We have not received all the project income from the SEDHRP yet, we have only received approximately 55% of projected so far.

2018-19

- For the 2018-19 budget preparation we have presented a series of options to address the shortfall in funding.
- The spreadsheet shows the options which were presented to the Officer Working Group.
 1. Increase income from funding partners to meet shortfall. Carry forward to be used as project budget.
 2. Increase income from funding partners to meet shortfall once the carryover has been included.
 3. Contributions from this year with inflation and liability added.
 4. Contributions with inflationary rate added. Shown here using CPI which is currently 3%.
- The favoured options by the Officer Working Group were options 3 and 4 shown above.
- Consensus was to go for the 3% plus any additional voluntary contributions.
- JT will be retiring from full-time work and will then allocate some time to help improve the budget.
- What will happen if no additional funding is found?
- There will be monthly budget monitoring in place for the first 6 months, if after this 6 month period it does not look like funding has been found, decisions will have to be made.

4. Talks & Presentations: Charging Policy – LG

- Charging for presentations – originally it was suggested that the price we had set was too high.
 - We have decided to charge £100 for presentations unless they are commercial in which case the charge will increase to £200 and £50 for charities.
 - We cannot guarantee that SC will be able to do every presentation that she is asked to.
 - Will be advertised on EEMP website.
- Agreed by MG.**

5. Delivery Plan Highlight Report – SC

- The Funding Strategy was adopted at the September Management Group Meeting. We are continuing to work on this.
- The Wildlife Refuges were adopted by SEDHREC on the 23rd October 2017. There is still some ongoing discontent with some users.
- Review of codes of conduct – have had several user meetings which have gone well so far. Will start to draft codes which will be available on the website for comments in January and February for six weeks.
- Fisheries – Devon & Severn IFCA have undertaken their mussel and cockle survey reports.
- Clean Up events – hope to get continued involvement from businesses.
- Integrated approach to signage on Exe.
- Will continue to work with the RYA, British Canoeing and the Green Blue to promote best practice on the Exe Estuary.

- Comment that messages on all signage needs to be the same across the estuary.

- Paddleboarders are still an issue and need to be approached. This should be done both through the EEMP and SEDHRP.

- A decision should hopefully be made by SEDHRP on whether the EEMP will be involved with their signage work in the early new year.

6. Recommendation on 2018/19 Delivery Plan – SC

- Split into 3 sections – Core Actions, Essential to Include and Other Partners Priorities.
- For discussion
 1. The summer festival we may be able to allocate time for this year, however we would need to find funding for this. MG propose that the festival doesn't go ahead this year and SC to attend other events instead.
 2. Flood and Coastal Risk Management – explore any possible opportunities with the EA.
- JT has had 2 meetings either side of the Exe to help dispel issues with users regarding Wildlife Refuges.

7. Winter Forum – SC

- This winter Forum will include the elections for Forum Chair and Vice Chair. ND will step down as Chair, LT will stay on for another year, ideally as Chair.
- We would like someone to represent the communities and take a balanced view – SC requested suggestions from the MG.
- JT to make an introduction as the new Chair of the Partnership.
- We are quite heavy on presentations this year so any ideas to break it up are welcome.
- Will make sure the final agenda is not too busy.
- An update is definitely needed from SEDHRP, to include Wildlife Refuges and next steps.
- JT had a discussion with Cllr John Hart and Cllr Andrew Leadbetter – a Harbour Master wage is approximately £38-52,000 per year. We will make it a priority of this Partnership to look further into the issue of the lack of a Harbour Master.
- JT to speak to David Bartram.
- GS suggested Teignbridge to take up soapbox session to talk about TDC Exclusion Zones on the Dawlish Warren beach and Teign Estuary. For powered leisure craft. 6 Feb – consultation planned. Not voluntary. 200m of beach.
- DC stated that RYA would object to this Exclusion Zone.

8. Review of Governance Arrangements of EEMP – LG

- Option three was chosen. This will include a Partnership Committee which will replace the Management Group, and an Executive Committee which will replace the Officer Working Group, as well as a Stakeholder Forum.
- GB expressed the need for the Executive to include interest groups. This will be taken into consideration.
- LT suggested a user with a boating background as this is a primarily land based body. She suggested the need for a Forum Chair and Forum Vice Chair to have a water based background to ensure water users are represented.

ACTION: SC, JT, LG, PC to further discuss interest group representation on the Executive group.

Memorandum of Agreement and Terms of Reference

- Changes made include:
 1. Change in partnership withdrawal terms from notifying Management Group to notifying the Chair of the Partnership Committee and Devon County Council (8.1 and 9.12)
 2. Clarification of voting members. (Pg. 18)
 3. Decision making – The meeting will only be considered quorate when either the Chair or Vice Chair and at least one third of the partnership committee are present. (Pg. 19)
 4. Role and purpose of Executive is set out (Pg.19 2.2)
 5. Changed appointment process of Forum Chair and Vice Chair to be selected via a written nomination and endorsed by three voting members. (Pg. 22)
 6. Removal of Focus Groups (Pg.22 2.4)
 7. Addition of new clause ensuring members act appropriately in the interest of the partnership (Pg. 18 vii)
 8. Stakeholder Forum and Group – Role of Stakeholder group to have greater informal liaison in consultation with users and public. (Pg.21)

- LG asked the group if it would be necessary to include a fuller code of conduct within the amended Terms of Reference, which details how members of the Partnership should conduct themselves. The MG didn't indicate a need to do this and were happy to adopt the amendments made.

ACTION: SC to email out updated MoA and Terms of Reference to MG for any amendments before the Forum. Final document to be brought to March MG meeting for agreement.

9. Update from the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership (SEDHRP) - NH

- Continued delivery of the strategy.
- Local Plan delivery with the District Councils (East Devon, Exeter and Teignbridge).
- Habitat Mitigation Officers have now been in place for a year – they have spoken to approximately 2,000 people. They have an educational remit.
- 1 year in post for the Devon Loves Dogs Officer. Has been holding events across the County, promoting responsible dog ownership.
- Dawlish Countryside Park is now open – SANGS site.
- The Wildlife Refuges have been agreed.
- Begin to implement – in the process of getting a patrol boat.
- Reengagement with users next year.
- Signage – inclusion of refuges in leaflets.
- Codes of conduct work – undertaken by SC, numerous meetings with users.
- Dawlish Warren monitoring of rare species.
- Carparking – executive 5th December.
- HLF bid for proposed new Dawlish Warren visitor centre.

- JT made point that re-engagement should be a top priority.

10. Presentation: Past and current position of shellfisheries in and around the Exe – SD

- Pacific oysters – 1970s farmed oyster trestles.
- Crab tiling over 100 years.
- Haplosporidium – cockle parasite.
- HRA: Assess presence of gatherers as well.

11. Presentation: Exmouth Mussels – MBS

- 200-300 tonnes per year sold through Exmouth Mussels. £350k into local economy. Employ nine people.
- Providing Habitat solutions.
- Leave mussels for 2 years to grow.
- MSC – don't damage source (ephemeral), help habitat in estuary, no bycatch due to our conveyor.
- Birds – needs practical action.
- Take seed from outside mouth of the Exe and move them up river.
- Bull Hill has decreased by 5/6ft – it needs mussel planting to replenish.
- May water in April – algal bloom. After storms of 2014, May water huge in 2015, depleted oxygen and killed everything.
- 57km squared of estuary bed is damaged by moorings.
- 500 tonnes north of Cockwood – laid seed.
- 18 litres of water per hour sieved by a mussel.
- Bloodhound can harvest 20 tonnes per day.
- No mussels in Teign, possibly due to dredging in harbour. 100 tonnes taken there from this area.
- Oyster racks need to be removed.
- Natural England will be looking at tagging Oystercatchers on the Exe next year.
- MBS expressed wanting IFCA and Natural England to work together to help improve the Exe through mussel seed. Need to move quickly when seed is available.
- Have moved most of the seed that needs to be for next year. About to move following year too.
- Can remove oysters.
- Suggest 10-20 tonnes around buoy at Bull Hill.
- Suggestion for extra signage to stop people hand gathering.

ACTION: NE, IFCA, MBS to arrange a meeting and work together on improving the Exe through relaying mussel seed.

12. Any other business

- No other business raised.

13. Agreement on Dates of next Management Group Meetings:

- 21st March 2018, 10am (TBC)

ACTION: Alan Wood to look into Starcross Yacht Club as meeting venue for March MG meeting.

- September 2018: date to be confirmed following agreement of governance.