

## EXE ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP



### MANAGEMENT GROUP MINUTES

Clinton Room, Committee Suite, County Hall, Exeter

2pm Tuesday 24 March 2015

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#### Present:

|                                       |                                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chair: Councillor Bernard Hughes, DCC | Graeme Smith, TDC              |
| Neil Downes, Forum Chair              | Cllr Andrew Cadbury, SPC       |
| Lynn Trout, Forum Vice Chair          | Katherine Gray, D&SIFCA        |
| Aidan Winder, DCC                     | Steve Edmonds, EDDC            |
| Stephanie Clark, EEMP                 | Hugh Davey, Environment Agency |

#### 1. Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence:

Apologies were noted from: Cllr Michael Howe (EDDC), Cllr Margaret Baldwin (ECC), Cllr Ted Hockin (TDC), Cllr Pat A Graham (ETC), Cllr Tim Pattison (WPC), Belinda Price (WPC), Megan Debenham (SPC), Cllr Terry Lowther (DTC), Lisa Bowman (ETC), Ann Tipper (DTC), Tom Manning (Natural England), Gavin Bloomfield (RSPB)

#### 2. Minutes and Action Log of previous meeting

Minutes from previous MG meeting were agreed as an accurate record and signed by BH.

#### 3. Budget Update 2014/2015

SC: introduced the budget monitoring statement showing the current financial position. There is currently a projected underspend of approximately £36,000 on the EEMP budget, accumulated from three years of involvement with the LiCCo project. This is planned to be carried forward into the next financial year (2015/16) and will provide a cushion against the impact of the ending of LiCCo funding and withdrawal of any other funding. DCC requirements are in place for this to go through internal approval process. In addition partners are requested to approve carry over by their respective organisations in writing to the EEMP.

We're not at a sustainable core contribution base, following the withdrawal of NE as a key funding partner. If it wasn't for this carry forward, the Partnership would not be able to carry out its activities during 2015/16.

SC: Budget update for LiCCo project referred to balanced budget achieved. There was not enough time to complete further teacher training and evaluation of the educational project, SC and the EA are currently looking into whether they can access funds to enable this to be carried out next year.

**AGREED:** The MG has taken note of the budget.

**ACTION:** All partners to respond to request for approval of carry-over of previous financial contributions into the next financial year as required by EEMP.

#### **4. Funding opportunities for 2015/16**

- Invitation to quote from NE's Innovation Funding  
2014/15 Innovation Funding (2K) for funding strategy elements of EEMP budgeting work, in particular for maintaining income by novel methods e.g. potential external funding.

- Marine external funding bid with NE & other European Marine Sites  
SC currently investigating a variety of potential funding bids in partnership with other organisations.

- Potential new Partners

Exminster Parish Council and Powderham Estate have been approached to become partners with interest shown. Lord Courtenay has been invited to the next MG meeting. Suggestions for potential partners included Topsham Community Association, Crown Estate and Wildlife Trust. Discussion on potential funding requirements for new members. This is to be incorporated into the Funding Strategy (next item) before pursuing further. BH suggested that I be invited to an Avocet Line meeting and investigate how we can work together.

**ACTION:** BH will contact the Chairman of the Rail Partnership to ask if I might be invited to a meeting.

- Funding Strategy 2015

Funding proposals need to be explored in context of broader Funding Strategy to identify how we might maintain the viability of the Partnership

BH: Raised concern about the whereabouts of the spiral wishing well created by the EEMP in partnership with Exmouth Rotary Club and where funds raised were going. Suggestions were put forward about where would be best to place the wishing well, including Ocean Blue at Exmouth (Leisure East Devon, taken over by EDDC) and at Exeter Canal Basin. GS stated that there would not be enough space at the Dawlish Warren Visitor Centre. SE said that he would be the best contact for help with moving the well around and that Charlie Plowden (EDDC) would be the best contact to site the well at Ocean Blue.

**ACTION:** SC to find out where the spiral wishing well currently is, whether the EEMP has funds accumulated from this over the years and find a good place to site it.

#### **5. Progress Report**

##### **a. Exe Estuary Officer progress against Action Plan – SC**

BH raised concerns that some individuals from various groups have not been involved in the Recreational Framework consultation. The groups response is that a good deal of effort was made to encourage involvement with this. Since the deadline has now passed, it was agreed that the piece of work will not be re-done, but SC stated that she will endeavour to include the relevant people in any further work that the EEMP carries out following on from this. SC also stated that she would like to carry out a review of the EEMP database to identify and fill any gaps that may be currently present.

LT stated that the Recreational Framework was a good piece of work and suggested that the River and Canal User Group should be involved in future work relating to this.

#### - LiCCo update

LiCCo project is now complete, with the completion of the Exe Heritage leaflet, A Level learning pack and four new interpretation signs to be installed by EDDC.

#### - Winter Forum 2015 feedback

62 people attended, with a broad representation of different sectors and good feedback from the 25 who completed feedback questionnaires. General comments stated that there were good presentations given, although there was too much 'management speak' and issues with the sound system again. Feedback on the LiCCo project was split, with some good outputs noted, but issues with the lack of public awareness.

#### - Summer Festival 2015

Planned for 1<sup>st</sup> August at Exeter Quay.

#### - Exe Explorer funding from Rail Partnership

Riviera Line project will only fund the additional print and design costs of 20,000 copies, that they will distribute. EEMP to pay for our own printed leaflets.

#### - Feasibility of new EEMP website

A costing indicates the most economic option will be to update website from in terms of content and functioning of website under the terms of Devon County Council IT provisions rather than by external contractor.

#### - Exmouth bird screen

Quotes obtained by EDDC indicate that construction of the bird screen will cost £2,200 (to be funded by Stuart Line Cruise donations) and £1,700 for path surface improvement work. SC has applied for £1,000 in locality funding through Councillor Bernard Hughes OBE. SE stated that the remaining £700 will be funded by EDDC.

#### - Action Plan 2015-2016 and Annual Review 2014-2015

SC is currently working on the Action Plan 2015-2016 and Annual Review 2014-2015. Several suggestions were brought to the group to discuss what should be included on this year's Action Plan:

Management Plan 2016 – consolidation and review of current Interim Plan. This is key to have in place for funding applications. SC will be requesting input from Partners.

Moorings – Group agreed that Moorings Management Plan or guidance was not needed. The only action required by the EEMP is signposting from EEMP website to websites of individual mooring authorities/associations.

Exe Estuary Counter Pollution Plan – HD and the group agreed that the Pollution Plan lies with the EA, so no action was needed from the EEMP.

Bait Digging & Crab Tiling Review – KG stated that the Crab Tile Survey is carried out every four years and is next due to be carried out next year. It was agreed that the EEMP should review the database of contact details it holds for these and perhaps work with IFCA if gaps need to be addressed to ensure involvement in future work. The Codes of Conduct should be checked to ensure they are up to date and promoted, as KG said that there is no awareness of these at present.

Environmental Health Audit Review – HD stated that the EA is unlikely to carry out an audit, but will check. HD suggested that Lewis Jones (SW Water) would be a good contact to find out what information is available throughout the estuary.

**ACTION:** HD to check whether the EA is likely to carry out an Environmental Health Audit in the near future.

Management of Abandoned Boats and Hulks – ECC are carrying out an extensive consultation, it was suggested that we wait to hear the results of the consultation before working on this.

Sustainable Fisheries – KG stated that there is no work currently that the EEMP need to be involved with but will keep SC updated about anything that arises.

#### **ACTIONS TO INCLUDE IN ACTION PLAN 2015-2016:**

- Draft Management Plan 2016 will be created this year and sent out to Partners with a deadline for approval.
- Management Measures as recommended by Disturbance Study and Recreational Framework.
- Signposting from EEMP website to websites of individual mooring authorities/associations.
- Bait Digging & Crab Tiling: Review database of contacts & address gaps; Investigate if Codes of Conduct need updating and promote.
- Recreational Zoning Review.

#### **ACTIONS TO INCLUDE IN ACTION PLAN 2016-2017:**

- Crab Tile Survey
- Management of Abandoned Boats and Hulks: Wait to hear results of ECC's consultation before identifying if there are any actions.

### **b. Partner progress against Management Plan - Updates from Partners**

- NE Conservation Advice Package

SC: NE have produced Conservation Advice packages and would like to invite Partners to comment. Tom Manning suggested that the best way to do this would be through a meeting during April, and will circulate a link to the Exe Estuary conservation documents (available on 31<sup>st</sup> March).

**ACTION:** SC to send a Doodle poll and a link to the Exe Estuary conservation documents and will organise a meeting to allow Partners to comment on NE's Conservation Advice package.

- River Basin Management Plans consultation

HD: Overview of the RBMP consultation which closes on 10<sup>th</sup> April. Any queries can be directed to HD directly at [hugh.davey@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:hugh.davey@environment-agency.gov.uk).

**ACTION:** SC to send out details of RBMP consultation and HD's contact details to MG.

### **6. Local funding letter to Natural England**

SC brought a letter to be agreed by the MG on behalf of the EEMP addressed to a high level within NE regarding the decision to withdraw funding. The letter was agreed by the Management Group and signed by BH to be sent to NE.

### **7. EEMP Mission Statement**

ND brought a draft of an EEMP Mission Statement for feedback from MG. The group agreed that this was a good starting point but needed further detail to highlight the full remit of the EEMP, whilst keeping the statement succinct.

**ACTION:** SC to add to EEMP Mission Statement and send to MG for approval.

## **11. Any other business**

The group raised no other business.

## **12. Date of next Management Group meeting:**

BH is unable to make the original date set for the next meeting due another important commitment. SC to arrange an alternative date.

**ACTION:** SC to send out a Doodle poll to arrange a suitable alternative date for the next Management Group meeting.