

# SEVERN ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

## Management Group Meeting

11.30am, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Monmouthshire County Council, Cwmbran

## MINUTES

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### Attendees:

Matthew Lewis (Chairman), Monmouthshire County Council  
Charlotte Street, SEP Project Officer  
Evangelia Moutselou, SEP/Cardiff University  
Rhoda Ballinger, Cardiff University  
Jim Mitchell, SEP  
Vaughan Grantham, Cardiff Council  
Rob Niblett, Gloucestershire County Council  
Andy Hicklin, Environment Agency SW Region  
Anne Valdes, Newport City Council  
Gillian Ellis-King, South Gloucestershire Council  
John Marks, Vale of Glamorgan Council  
Charlotte Pagendam, English Nature  
Steve Knowles, ASERA/SEP

### 1. Apologies for absence

George Ashworth, Monmouthshire County Council  
Jessica Poole, CCW  
Sarah Diacono, Somerset County Council

### 2. SEP Finances Update (to be tabled)

#### i. SEP Account

CS stated that she had only received the account statement from Cardiff University finance that morning and was therefore not able to prepare the usual format report. However she did have available the account breakdown if partners were interested. She summarised this breakdown and stated that the SEP account currently stood at £51,000.

#### ii. Interreg Account

Again, she presented the breakdown for the Interreg account which stood at -£18000. She stated the reason for this being that 3 claims had now gone to the lead partner however they were still waiting for payment. CS stated that she had been informed that payment for the first claim was imminent. There were time limits set between the lead partner receiving payment from the secretariat and paying partners, however after this first payment things should become more streamlined.

### 3. Project Officer Appointment

#### i. Update

CS alerted the group to an email she had circulated previously stating that unfortunately she had decided not to renew her contract with the SEP/Cardiff Uni in the New Year. A small sub-group had been formed to look at re-appointment and a draft advert and job spec had been drawn up. GEK and AH both had comments to add to the documents. It was decided that 'Secondment applications are also invited' should be added to the advert.

**ACTION: CS to finalise documents and circulate to the Management Group for their approval.**

**ACTION: CS to forward documents to Cardiff Uni Personnel.**

The group looked at timing for when interviews would be held and it was decided that the week beginning the 17<sup>th</sup> January was the earliest possible. ML asked the question as to whether interim arrangement between CS leaving on the 18<sup>th</sup> January and the new appointee starting had been considered. RCB commented that she and CS would look at what would need to be done in that period and if she was able, CS would consider working one or two days per week in this period.

**ACTION: RCB and CS to address interim cover.**

The group thanked CS for her hard work over the past 2 years and wished her well for the future.

#### ii. Corepoint Project (time allocation / finances)

RCB stated that the recently approved Corepoint project had available one day per week funding for project management/admin tasks which would be available for the SEP Officer. This had been drawn into the job spec which the Management Group were supportive of.

### 4. Joint Advisory Committee Update

#### i. Terms of Reference – Next Steps

CS circulated the ToR which had slight amendments following discussion at the last JAC meeting. She stated that Dr. Steve Fletcher had been approached to give an 'outsiders' view on the document, commenting on areas within the document that partners were uneasy about. CS mentioned that the SEP had offered to pay for his time which he anticipated would amount to 10 hours work.

The Management Group felt this would be useful and worthwhile if his report addressed recurring areas of common concern. GEK highlighted the following points that South Glos would like to see addressed:

- The legal nature of the agreement. Why should it be a Terms of Reference and not a partnership agreement.. Is it easy to progress to a partnership agreement once this first document has been agreed?
- The relationship/position within the partnership between the funders and non-funders? What do the funders get that the non-funders don't? We want to encourage non-funders to become funders. Suggestion made to pull of Funding Formula into a separate document.
- Re. decision making process, it needs to be made clear what would happen if a partner were to object...would decision go through only with objection minuted?
- What would be the situation with the voting/decision making process when it came to plans or projects and the EMS? This is something that has been avoided in the ToR.

**ACTION: CS to forward these questions to Dr. Fletcher.**

## ii. Funding Formula

CS then raised the issue about the Funding Formula. Would it be more appropriate if we want to get the ToR agreed, to pull the Funding Formula out of the document? GEK commented that as their subscription was to rise significantly, she would have difficulty finding the extra funding. GEK also commented that she would like to see the Les Esturiales subscription taken out of the Funding Formula or spread between partners.

CS stated that she and NR would be looking to send out next years invoices shortly. ML suggested that the levels of funding from partners be negotiated and decided upon for this next financial years contributions prior to the Funding Formula being approved.

**ACTION: CS to make amendments and to discuss with partners and Dr Fletcher the best way to approach this issue.**

## 5. Joint Estuary Initiative

### i. SECG Secretariat

CS gave the group a brief update on the status of the SECG secretariat. She reported a meeting had been held with Diarmuid Mulrenan and David Harris (Monmouthshire CC), the new chair of the group. All files had been transferred to the SEP and Cardiff Uni were in the process of setting up a new account for the transfer of SECG funds.

## 6. Coastatlantic Progress Report

### i. General / Stakeholder Involvement (Charlotte Street)

CS reported to the group that the SEP (Cardiff Uni) were to host a Technical Meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January. CS was working with Brian Shipman of Cornwall CC to develop a structure and workshop sessions for the meeting as well as the logistics of meeting arrangements. The aim of this meeting is to give the project a cohesive structure and start to look at final reporting.

**ii. Access and Interpretation (Jim Mitchell)**

JM gave the group an update on the progress of the Access project referring to areas of progress and areas where the project has highlighted issues to be addressed and overcome in relation to the European Marine Site. JM stated he had been working closely with EN and CCW to ensure the project is in accordance with the Habitats Regulations. CP presented a paper to the group that provided a background to the regulations and drew attention to the responsibilities of competent authorities when it came to access and the EMS. It is necessary to look at any access project and ensure there is no demonstrable impact on the site.

GEK assured CP that the purpose of the Access project was to look at access issues and interpretation with the EMS central to the project. This point was made in connection with any promotion/interpretation material produced i.e. any material would highlight the sensitivity of the site to visitors rather than encourage extra visitors to the detriment of the site.

**iii. Urban/Rural Interdependencies (Stuart Bardsley)**

**iv. Cultural Heritage (Richard Osgood)**

GEK reported that both Stuart Bardsley and Richard Osgood had been to visit the Galician partners and had benefited a great deal from this information exchange.

**ACTION: CS to contact for report**

**v. Natural Heritage/ GIS (Steve Knowles)**

CS reported on Steve's behalf that he was starting to look at contents and presentation of guidance for planners for the Natural Heritage strand. He was meeting with a small group to get feedback on this that afternoon.

**7. Corepoint Project – Report of Dublin Kick-off meeting**

RCB gave a brief report of the Corepoint Project Kick-off meeting attended by herself and Steve Knowles. She referred to the SEP partner involvement with the project on the Local Information Systems and Training Module strands. The first training module is to be held in Cork in February and the second in Cardiff in June/July. RCB informed partners there was still a chance to get involved.

**ACTION: RCB/CS to circulate information when available to partners.**

**8. Newsletter and Website Proposals**

CS stated that the Autumn 2004 newsletter had been circulated and if partners wanted to start thinking about the next edition, an email would be circulated in the New Year calling for articles. JM updated the group on the website stating that the Cardiff University web design department were being contracted to re-design the site towards a more public friendly structure that could be adopted for distribution/circulation of the COAST ATLANTIC project objectives.

CS added to this that CS/RCB/JM were looking at reviewing JM's contract in light of the Access project workload and links this has with communication projects and personal circumstance.

**ACTION: CS/RCB/JM to finalise these changes/amendments to contract and circulate these proposals to the Management Group before Christmas.**

**9. AOB**

GEK alerted the group that Cllr Peter Tyzack had written to the president of the Les Esturiales, M. Plisson expressing concern over the lack of activity in the past year. Awaiting response.

**ACTION: CS to circulate this letter to the Management Group**

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

**10.30am Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2005. Venue to be confirmed.**