

# SEVERN ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

## Management Group Meeting

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2005, 10.00 am  
Newport City Council



## Minutes

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**Chair: George Ashworth**

**Attendees:**

**ACTIONS**

George Ashworth, Monmouthshire County Council  
Natasha Barker, Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP)  
Rhoda Ballinger, Cardiff University  
Gillian Ellis-King, South Gloucestershire Council  
John Marks, Vale of Glamorgan  
Matthew Harris, Cardiff Council (?)  
Jim Mitchell, SEP  
Lia Moutselou, SEP  
Anne Vales, Newport City Council

**1 Apologies for Absence**

Alastair Chapman, Forest of Dean Council  
Charlotte Pagendam, English Nature  
Dick Sage, Bristol City Council

**2 Minutes from Previous Management Group Meeting (13<sup>th</sup> June 2005)**

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the last Management Group meeting.

**3 Matters Arising**

In relation to the minutes of the previous meeting:

- The place of SCOSLA within the SEP structure will be clarified at the forthcoming JAC meeting. The group will form a more integral part of the SEP from Spring 2006 onwards
- The Secretariat of Les Estuariales will be passed on to the SEP in October 2005 for 2 years. The relevant secretariat files and information from the Portuguese partners will be sent to the SEP soon.
- Arfodir have suggested to CCW that the ICZM training course lead by ENVISION consultants as part of COREPOINT project would be useful to repeat in order to train coastal practitioners in Wales.
- SK submitted a bid for funds to support SEP work and JM mentioned that the SEP needs to discuss an Aggregates Levy fund bid with the Welsh Assembly Government and appropriate representatives from the Aggregates industry.

#### 4 Partnership Agreement

NB reported that after detailed consultation with Cardiff University legal department, the partnership agreement has been finalised on the basis of our previous discussions. One of the most important changes is that there is a clear statement of the non-legal nature of the document. The SEP was also advised not to make reference to funding arrangements for the partnership in this document. Financial terms can be incorporated in a future agreement, possibly alongside constituting SEP as a legal entity. The agreement also avoids any reference to the host body, CU in this case, and responsibilities it may have towards the SEP and its staff.

***Revised Partnership Agreement to be sent to JAC prior to its forthcoming meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> October***

NB, LM

***Partner and potential partner organisations should be invited to sign the agreement by the end of the year.***

NB,  
All

#### 5 SEP and Cardiff University (CU)

The MG discussed a draft MoU between the SEP and CU, which aims to clarify the relationship between the two bodies and keep future overheads costs at a lower level. Currently, CU's contribution to SEP comes up to £36,000 a year. The costing of overheads, which is currently reduced for the SEP, will be reconsidered in six months time. It is essential that an MoU between the SEP and CU is agreed ASAP and within the next nine months. The COREPOINT project will involve work which will help to justify the hosting of SEP at CU. However, potential alternative SEP hosts should also be considered.

GA thanked CU for their important contribution and support to the SEP to date.

***All to comment on example Thames Estuary Partnership MoU that was circulated by NB***

All

***The SEP must keep a clear record of the time of CU technicians and other staff it makes usage of to report in the process of the MoU negotiation***

NB, JM,  
SK, LM

***Develop an MoU between SEP & CU in consultation with CU staff; present and report to next Management Group meeting.***

NB, RB  
and all to  
observe

#### 6 Business Plan

NB presented the Management Group with a draft structure for a SEP Business Plan. Background material included a business plan for 1995-97; an SEP sponsorship opportunities document dated 2000-01 (which was not circulated due to change of personnel) and the Solent Forum business plan for 2004-07. Based on the information presented in these documents the MG were invited to recommend a Business Plan format. The Plan will mainly be addressed to SEP partners but it will also be used to attract future investment. NB suggested that the plan have a three-year term and that it caters for long term as well as annual monitoring using existing sets of indicators for effective ICZM. The MG suggested that the plan remains brief and punchy. An action strategy or relevant project activity sheets needs to be completed and included in the business plan. Advice from the RACD, CU should be sought.

**GEK to provide South Glos project activity sheets to be used as examples for an SEP activity strategy** **GEK**

**SEP to draft project activity information sheets as part of an SEP activity strategy and to present at forthcoming JAC** **NB**

**Business Plan to be presented at the forthcoming JAC for consultation and to be completed by end of 2005** **NB**

**Business Plan to be adopted in Spring 2006** **All**

**7 Finance**

NB reported on the merging of various SEP accounts into one for simplification. The picture is still rather complex as there are numerous separate contributions that go into one account. It was noted that it is possible to keep contributions to the SEP towards the provision of secretariat and administration services for separate groups quite distinct (e.g. SECG and potentially ASERA in the future). There is an (unresolved) issue over the minimal contribution made towards groups like SCOSLA compared to larger contributions and the entitlement of organisations to full SEP services.

NB reported that she is gradually getting a clearer understanding of the SEP financial position. There is an overspend emerging as some staff costs were not incorporated in the calculations of the initial COASTATLANTIC cost projections. GEK mentioned it might be possible to transfer some COASTATLANTIC funds to the SEP from South Glos Council if the problem is not otherwise resolved.

The MG encouraged the SEP to progress enquiries into the Aggregate Levy fund. It was also suggested that the SEP considers involvement with a sea level rise project which might be commencing as part of the Les Estuariales network. This project may fit in well with the recent prioritisation of climate change by the WAG.

**NB to update MG on the issue of overspend** **NB**

**SEP to examine potential involvement in future climate change –Les Estuariales project and approach WAG to discuss** **NB , SEP**

**8 Joint Estuary Groups & JAC Agenda**

The MG was presented with and approved an outline programme and draft agenda for the Joint Estuary Groups and JAC meetings on the 10<sup>th</sup> October. The programme will be fine tuned closed to the date of the JAC meeting. The SEP has invited BBC Coast presenter, Nicholas Crane to talk at the JAC. Nick Crane is interested in the work of SEP and although he might not be able to make it to the forthcoming JAC, could contribute to a future event (see Severn Day under item 10). LM presented the MG with a list of available venues for the forthcoming JAC and asked for guidance on the choice of venue. It was agreed that the JAC should be held at an economic, easily accessible and pleasant venue. Walton Park Hotel, Clevedon was identified as a good option.

The MG agreed that there is no need to circulate numerous documents prior to the JAC. A one-page bulletin on SEP activity, together with the JAC

agenda and partnership agreement, will be a sufficient. The MG also agreed that an update on current lists, consultations and policy developments would be appropriate for the JAC meeting.

***Prepare and circulate succinct SEP activity update and circulate with other JAC documents (agenda, outline programme, directions, list of invites and Partnership agreement) to JAC invitees by the middle of September 2005***

NB, LM

***An email reminder to be send to JAC invitees***

LM

***Update JAC group on current consultations, reviews and policy developments***

NB

## 9 COASTATLANTIC Progress Report

- **Strands: Access, Natural Heritage, GIS**

JM stated that the Natural Heritage, GIS project strands will be wrapped up at the end of this year (2005). The Natural Heritage strand produced a draft development guidance notes. A GIS tool mapping natural heritage and recreational activity will also be one of the final outputs of Coastatlantic. MCC and FoD council have invoiced SEP for the access projects that the Access project has funded.

- **Cultural Heritage, Urban-Rural Interdependencies**

GEK reported that the Cultural Heritage strand will also produce guidance notes as an output, in a similar manner to the natural heritage strand. A draft of the guidance notes can be made available from South Glos Council.

- **Communications Strategy**

JM discussed the SEP Communication Strategy with the MG. The strategy seeks to address the interactions and communications of the SEP with: a) internal structured within the host institution CU, b) Partners and JAC invitees (and potential partners) and c) the general public. A Communication strategy will help prepare more public orientated SEP activity, potentially in the shape of a 'Severn Estuary Day' open to the public.

## 10 COREPOINT Progress Report

RB has not much to report on the COREPOINT project activity. Partners are getting on with their respective project work and CU has recently completed some work on policy and regulation in the coast. COREPOINT partners will be meeting in October.

## 11 Any Other Business

- **'Severn Estuary Day'**

The MG approves the idea for establishing a Severn Estuary Day sooner rather than later. A day open to public will help lay the foundations for a Severn Estuary Forum and help develop the interactions and work of the SEP with the public and users of the Severn Estuary. A provisional date for the 'Severn Estuary Day' was set for Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

NB, JM

- **Bristol City Council**

NB reported on the results of a recent conversation with Dick Sage, Bristol City Council, which indicated that funding SEP next financial year may not be justifiable after an internal review and budget cuts, particularly of non-

statutory initiatives. It was suggested that Cllr Peter Tyzack may approach Cllr Charlie Price (who signed the original Severn Estuary Strategy and hosted its' launch) to encourage more interest in Bristol City Council.

**NB,  
Cllr  
Tyzack**

**12 Date and Venue of Next Meeting**

Joint Advisory Committee 10<sup>th</sup> October 2005, 13.00

**All to  
note.**

**10.00am, Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2005, Thornbury**