

SEVERN ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP



Management Group

Thursday 11th October 2007

09.30am, Environment Agency Offices, Severn View Services, Aust

Minutes

Chair: George Ashworth

ACTION

Attendees:

George Ashworth, Monmouthshire County Council.
 Natasha Barker, Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP) Officer.
 Mervyn Bramley, Independent Engineer & Environmentalist – from 1130
 Gillian Ellis-King, South Gloucestershire Council.
 Vaughan Grantham, Cardiff Council.
 Rhys Morgan, Severn Estuary Officer, Environment Agency.
 Paul Parker, SEP assistant.
 Peter Tyzack, South Gloucestershire Council (Acting JAC Chair).

1 Apologies for absence

Alastair Chapman, Forest of Dean Council
 Rob Niblett, Gloucestershire County Council
 Rhoda Ballinger, Cardiff University

2 Minutes from previous Management Group Meeting (21st June 2007)

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

3 Matters Arising

Progress with actions from the last meeting were checked and NB agreed to follow up those not yet completed, as detailed in the table below.

All

ACTION No.	ACTIONS from 21.06.07	Complete?
07/34	Final COASTATLANTIC financial position to be clarified.	See item 5.1
07/35	NB to send CCW bid & CCW comments to VG who will develop the grant application with CCW.	Yes
07/36	NB to submit response to the EA's Working Together consultation for formalise progress & proposals for co-operation over WFD implementation.	No
07/37	NB to contact UWE Geography dept to invite involvement in the proposal for public forums.	Yes
07/38	GA to retain contact with SDC, starting with a letter from SEP to SDC re-emphasising its experience, contacts, independent role & balanced planning perspective provided through SEP services.	Yes
07/39	RB to investigate the opportunity for '3 rd mission' funding for debate on tidal energy options.	No
07/40	NB prepare person specification for JAC Chair & remind JAC email group that nominations are invited and the procedure.	Yes (person spec only in email to JAC)
07/41	NB to seek a venue at @Bristol. GA to reserve	In progress

	Monmouthshire County Council offices on 8 & 9 th November for Estuary Groups Day & Les Esturiales conference.	
07/42	NB to inform Esturiales members of the date of the conference.	Yes
07/43	PP to incorporate school contacts into SEP contacts database.	No
07/44	RB to brief PP on updating the planning framework.	No
07/45	NB to circulate ICZM discussion document to MG and make available to JAC members.	No
07/46	NB to publicise ICZM training opportunity through JAC email.	Yes
07/47	NB to liaise with Graham Lymbery over review of SEP.	Yes
07/48	RB to highlight SEP priorities (see AR&AP07-08 and SEP Business Plan 06-09) at COREPOINT partners meeting for input to COREPOINT 2 proposal.	Yes
07/49	NB to circulate COREPOINT response to the Maritime Green Paper and submit an SEP response endorsing this.	Yes (no SEP response).
07/50	NB send information to PT about the EC Atlantic Arc Environment & ICZM conference/emerging Interreg proposal & PT to confirm availability of funding to support his attendance.	Yes
07/51	NB to forward contact details for Kat Sanders, Humber to VG.	Yes

4 Fellowship Outcomes

NB disseminated copies of the Draft Phase 2 report from her visit to the Penzhinskaya Guba estuary in Russia during her sabbatical. It was suggested that she present the outcomes from the fellowship during the Esturiales day on 9th November.

ACTION 07/52 Esturiales agenda to include presentation on NB's fellowship.

NB

5 Financial Position & SEP Staff

5.1 COASTATLANTIC

Cardiff University are awaiting the final 5% of the total claims to be reimbursed at which time they will close the RCGE361 account and move the remaining balance, anticipated to be approximately £29000) into another account (e.g. RCGE421 – SEP's 06-07 account) giving time to resolve the overspend as previously discussed (see Minute 4.1, 21.06.07) . This would therefore not effect SEP's current operations (RCGE464 – 2007-08 account).

ACTION 07/53: NB & RB to seek clarification from CU regarding recruitment from RCGE464 budget.

NB & RB

5.2 CCW Grant Offer

VG had submitted the bid with support from David Mitchell and an offer had been made for £3000 towards SEP services. It was suggested that a copy of the agreement be sent to Natural England asking for a similar level of commitment to SEP services.

ACTION 07/54: NB to write to Natural England regarding support for SEP services.

NB

5.3 EC Project Opportunities

South Gloucestershire and Monmouthshire Councils have agreed their contributions can be matched into the Corepoint 2 project proposal which would run from 2008 for 42 months. Other project opportunities for EC Interreg exist through DeltaNet and TIDE (information circulated during the meeting). It was considered that SEP should consider matching additional funds as long as the EC project(s) did not entail

significant additional work/technical research and ensure the focus remains on the core work of SEP.

5.4 Secretariat Services (ASERA & SECG)

ASERA – Since SK left SEP in September, Mathew Lewis has discussed ASERA's position with NB following an extra working group meeting they had in September. We are 6 months into the 07-08 agreement between SEP/CU and ASERA. ASERA's simplest option for the short term would be for SEP to cover SK's 1 day/week for the next quarter of the agreement (until the end of 2007) when the situation would be reviewed. Further progress may have been made by that time on work needed in relation to the cSAC designation. The Management Group recommended that NB seek to cover the role and replace SEP work with another member of staff.

ACTION 07/55: NB confirm to ASERA SEP's willingness to continue with the ASERA Secretariat role. NB

SECG – Wendy Dodds has left Cardiff and the Secretariat role therefore needs to be fulfilled by NB or a replacement. NB is waiting to speak with David Harris to get a better understanding of future staff requirements.

ACTION 07/56: NB to clarify current and future SECG Secretariat requirements with Dave Harris. NB

6 Membership Scheme & Voting Procedures

Actions 07/26-07/28 were pending further work; to draft voting procedures; prepare a publicity flyer and membership pack and open the membership scheme.

NB

ACTION 07/57: NB to re-draft voting procedures and make the membership pack available as soon as possible in order to open the scheme.

7 Estuary Groups Day & JAC, 8th November

7.1 Draft Agenda

Due to the recent release of the SDC report 'Turning the Tide' it was agreed that an hour of the next JAC meeting be allocated towards:

- i) brief presentation summarising the SDC report recommendations
- ii) open discussion about the report recommendations and next steps
- iii) feedback on the role of SEP.

ACTION 07/58: NB to send draft agenda to SEP MG before distribution to all members of the JAC next week. NB

7.2 JAC Chair Nominations

At the last meeting the Management Group had agreed to formalise the Chair of the JAC position as Peter had been the Acting Chair since it started. There had been no nominations for JAC Chair received through the email to the JAC group in June. The position needed to be formalised. It was agreed that Peter Tyzack be approached to ask if he would be happy to continue and we formalise his position as Chair at the next meeting in November.

ACTION 07/59: NB to ask PT if he is happy for his position as Chair of the JAC be formalised at the next meeting on 8th November 2007. NB

8 Esturiales AGM & Conference, 9th November

Due to the current debate over a Severn Estuary Barrage the overall theme for the conference would be tidal energy. Esturiales members would benefit from participation in the Estuary Groups Day with their AGM, one or two speakers and a field trip. It was considered useful for the field trip to follow the JAC meeting to pull in more local partners and a visit to Brean Down/Weston-Super-Mare area to discuss the barrage proposal would be appropriate.

ACTION 07/60: NB to send draft agenda for 8th & 9th November to Esturiales members and obtain confirmation of their attendance before booking translators. NB

9 Forum 2008

Early July had been suggested by RB for the 2008 Forum and four venues reserved.

ACTION 07/61: NB to notify all members of the date for next years Forum.

NB

10 COREPOINT Progress Report

RB had been unable to attend the meeting at short notice so there was no report on progress. It was noted that NB & RM had been at the ICZM Training School in Pembrokeshire earlier in the week.

11 SDC Report – Turning the Tide

11.1 SEP position on the Severn Barrage

This item was discussed at the beginning of this meeting for 1 hour. Recent correspondence from the Dept for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (DBERR – former DTI) and a transcript of discussions in the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) this week were summarised. All present agreed that SEPs key role was in the co-ordination and provision of information, promoting a balanced position and where necessary raising questions for further consideration. SEPs neutrality was seen as important and essential in promoting public engagement. NB had invited SDC to speak at the next JAC meeting and was awaiting a response. It was agreed that use of SEPs logo should be endorsed through the Management Group or through the Chair if urgent.

ACTION 07/62: NB forward emails from Karla Hill (DBERR) and the transcript of discussions in the WAG this week to all MG members.

NB

ACTION 07/63: GA & NB draft a recommendation for the next JAC to clarify SEPs position and invite discussion on SEP's future role in relation to this significant issue.

GA & NB

11.2 Public Forums

Mervyn Bramley attended the meeting from 1130am for this discussion. GA outlined the importance of SEP having no view on issues such as the Severn Barrage and its role as an honest broker, so that constituent bodies upheld SEPs role of ensuring a balanced overview. MB indicated that he was an independent retired individual, former head of R&D at the Environment Agency and member of the Royal Society for Arts, Industry and Commerce (RSA). The Wales & West Branch of the RSA were supporting the proposal for public forums on tidal energy and had obtained the support of University of the West of England, based on previous consultation events he had helped facilitate for the State of the Environment of SW England report. He felt there was a strong role for public engagement and would like to work with SEP by setting up a small organising committee.

GA indicated that SEP needed to be careful with the use of its logo. GEK emphasised SEPs involvement only from a neutral standpoint and gave feedback from the Forum which had indicated that MB's presentation had come across in favour of the barrage. MB felt he had tried to offer a broad spectrum of options and asked if SEP was in favour of sustainable development. The complete independent role of SEP was emphasised. MB indicated this was valued by the RSA as an excellent influence on the way the public forums would be conducted. NB indicated that SEP had no additional resources or capacity to host public forums and staff time would need to be funded. WAG & DBERR would hopefully recommend stakeholder engagement and public consultation as part of the feasibility study, with appropriate financial support. GA questioned whether SEP should wait until the feasibility study was complete before holding public forums. MB would report on the results of this discussion to the RSA at their meeting next week and feedback to GA/NB. It was agreed that the recommendation from the JAC (see Action 07/63 above) would guide SEPs future role. SEP should remain in direct contact with Government regarding use of its services for stakeholder and public engagement.

ACTION 07/64: SEP write to the Dept for DBERR and WAG.

GA & NB

11.3 Wiki on Severn Barrage

Not discussed. Pending outcome of JAC discussions on SEP's role.

12 Consultations, Meetings & Conferences

RM offered to comment on the following consultations at the next JAC:

- Bristol Port new deep water terminal
- Penarth headland link
- EA Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Aggregates

ACTION 07/65: RM to report to JAC on recent consultations

RM

13 Any Other Business

RM suggested that all Severn Tidings be sent via him for EA distribution, possibly by email. This could be tackled as part of a review of all EA contacts following the database review.

ACTION 07/66: NB liaise with RM to clarify EA contacts in the revised SEP database before Severn Tidings is distributed.

NB & RM

14 Date & Venue of Next Meeting

10.00am, Thursday 17th January 2008 at EA offices, Severn View Services, Aust.

The meeting closed at 1230.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

ACTION No.	ACTIONS from 11.10.07	Complete?
07/52	Esturiales agenda to include presentation on NB's fellowship.	
07/53	NB & RB to seek clarification from CU regarding recruitment from RCGE464 budget.	
07/54	NB to write to Natural England regarding support for SEP services.	
07/55	NB confirm to ASERA SEP's willingness to continue with the ASERA Secretariat role.	
07/56	NB to clarify current and future SECG Secretariat requirements with Dave Harris.	
07/57	NB to re-draft voting procedures and make the membership pack available as soon as possible in order to open the scheme.	
07/58	NB to send draft agenda to SEP MG before distribution to all members of the JAC next week.	
07/59	NB to ask PT if he is happy for his position as Chair of the JAC be formalised at the next meeting on 8 th November 2007.	
07/60	NB to send draft agenda for 8 th & 9 th November to Esturiales members and obtain confirmation of their attendance before booking translators.	
07/61	NB to notify all members of the date for next years Forum.	
07/62	NB forward emails from Karla Hill (DBERR) and the transcript of discussions in the WAG this week to all MG members.	
07/63	GA & NB draft a recommendation for the next JAC to clarify SEPs position and invite discussion on SEP's future role in relation to this significant issue.	
07/64	SEP write to the Dept for DBERR and WAG.	
07/65	RM to report to JAC on recent consultations.	
07/66	NB liaise with RM to clarify EA contacts in the revised SEP database before Severn Tidings is distributed.	