

Minutes of the Essex Coastal Forum

Date:	12 July 2012	
Time:	1pm-3pm	
Venue:	London Gateway Offices, DP World, Corringham	
Chairman:	Cllr John Jowers (JJ)	
Attendees:	<p>Cllr Keith Hudson (KH) Cllr Miriam Lewis (ML) Cllr Pam Sambridge (PS) Mr John Russel (JR) Mr Richard Atkins (RA) Mr Phil Sturges (PS) Cllr Ray Howard (RH)</p> <p>Mr Mark Johnson (MJ) Mr Barny Richardson (BR) (substitute for Mr St Joseph) Mr Mark Evershed (ME) (substitute for Ms Amanda Raffaelli) Mr Marc Outten (MO) (substitute for David Hedges) Dave Bissenden (DB) (substitute for Richard Hatter) Mrs Hilary Rowlands (HR) Ms Nicky Spurr (NS)</p>	<p>Rochford District Council Maldon District Council Tendring District Council Tendring District Council Southend Borough Council Natural England Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (ECC Rep)/Castle Point Borough Council Environment Agency Essex Coast Organisation</p> <p>Castle Point Borough Council</p> <p>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Thurrock Council</p> <p>Essex County Council Essex County Council</p>
Apologies:	<p>Cllr Tracey Chapman Mrs Jane Burch Cllr Tim Young Ms Helen Chappell Mrs Lucy Shepherd Cllr John Lamb Mrs Beverley McClean Mr Andrew St Joseph Ms Amanda Raffaelli Mrs Catherine Whitehead Cllr Neil Gulliver Cllr Nigel Edey</p> <p>Cllr Richard Moore Matt Winslow David Hedges</p> <p>Richard Hatter</p>	<p>Essex County Council Suffolk County Council Colchester Borough Council English Heritage Essex County Council Southend Borough Council Colchester Borough Council Essex Coast Organisation Castle Point Borough Council Natural England Chelmsford City Council Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (ECC Rep) Basildon Borough Council Basildon Borough Council Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Thurrock Council</p>

Marcus Pearson (MP) delivered a very interesting presentation re DP World (a London Gateway project). Amongst other things, the presentation included the following;

- Compensation has been paid to fishermen who use the frontage, and that this will be ongoing should it be proved that dredging has affected fishing.
- Tenant farmer has been engaged to manage the newt ponds
- Best Practice notes are being compiled re how to construct a port on a contaminated site
- MMO deals with dredging licences and tidal works approval with the granting of all other licences being the responsibility of either Natural England or the Environment Agency
- 76 000 litres of fuel were recovered from the soil
- 'Thurrock Thames Visitor Centre' is being constructed

Action : JJ to write a letter of thanks to Marcus Pearson

JJ/NS

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Members of the Forum were welcomed by Cllr John Jowers (JJ) and introductions were made. It was agreed that apologies received would be incorporated in the minutes of the meeting

2. Review of current Essex Coastal Forum (ECF) representation

Discussion took place re the value of seeking representation from the following sectors/groups;

Tourism : ML advised this of great value to Maldon, Southend and Tendring. This is the responsibility of Visit Essex and therefore under regeneration for which ECC had representation. Tourism updates can be fed in to future meetings.

Royal Yachting Association: Inclusion of an additional sectoral interest group could result in many more wishing to be involved, which could make the meetings unmanageable. Any group can have access to the ECF papers and be invited to attend specific meetings if relevant issues/agenda items arise.

Marine Management Organisation (MMO): lack of representation questioned – NS advised this had been sought but advised insufficient staff resources available to attend, though they were on the distribution list for papers. Noted that Suffolk's Coastal Forum includes MMO representation but felt this might be justified because Suffolk was within the 1st Marine Planning area. It was agreed that the MMO could be specifically invited when there were relevant agenda items for their discussion.

Kent County Council (KCC): It was decided that with JJ and JL both being actively involved on the Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA) that information could be fed into the ECF to / from KCC via that route.

Energy sector: it was questioned whether this would be tidal/wind or nuclear and agreed that attendance should instead be sought when relevant agenda items were to be discussed.

Coastguard: The value of involving the coastguard in the ECF was briefly discussed although JJ with his responsibilities for Emergency Planning ensured that these issues were already picked up. ML asked whether there was any shared working in connection

with the cost of cleaning up pollution – it was advised that there is a Joint Emergency Planning Officers' Group in existence and that authorities contributed a specified amount and that expenditure of this fund was controlled centrally.

RH valued the trip round the London Gateway site and felt that it could be beneficial to have some future meetings out on site to enable specific aspects of coast protection to be reviewed. JJ felt that round trips can be time consuming, but that site visits might be justified where a specific issue/item of interest exists.

JJ asked members to highlight agenda items which they'd like to have discussed by the ECF to the secretariat in advance of meetings - discussion ensued.

The new structure regarding partnership funding was briefly discussed as the percentage scores schemes achieved could increase considerably depending on the level of partnership funding and that this could affect how a local authority chooses to contribute funding.

Action : NS to add the new system of partnership funding for flood and coastal erosion works is added to the agenda for a future meeting

RH raised issues at Tilbury Port and MJ advised that nothing was being done there that compromised the defence.

JJ advised that the structure of the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCC) had changed recently and that members could now be involved outside formal meetings. It was felt that input of the ECF could be useful in inputting into or reviewing the Medium Term Plan. The agenda should therefore be circulated to ECF members so that extra comment can be raised.

Action : NS to ensure RFCC agendas are circulated to the ECF and input fed through to relevant RFCC representatives

RH felt the Port of London Authority (PLA) could be of relevance to RFCC issues regarding the Thames and the River Crouch. JJ felt that the PLA did not have a mandate for the whole of Essex and felt it appropriate that Members could be co-opted on as and when required through the duty of co-operation

3. Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) Update – Mark Johnson (Environment Agency)

New saltmarsh information, showing a reduced loss of saltmarsh than previously understood, had been incorporated into the Statement of Case in 2011 which was then submitted to the Secretary of State to ensure compliance with the Habitat Regulations. A letter had been received around May, from Defra on behalf of the Secretary of State, to confirm agreement.

An addendum to the SMP had been prepared and discussed at a Client Steering Group (CSG) meeting on Monday resulting in some minor changes being made. The amended version when available, would be circulated through the CSG officers to elected members for agreement. Once agreed the SMP would be forwarded to the Environment Agency's Regional Director (Toby Willison) to sign off, which was expected in late August or September.

MJ/PS explained that the difference in figures had arisen due to a different methodology and interpretation being adopted and that it had showed the importance of continued monitoring.

It was advised that the saltmarsh loss estimates had reduced from 45 to 1 hectare pa. A recent RFCC workshop had discussed whether Essex might be prepared to take remediation schemes from other areas of the country if there was money made available to them for doing so. This would be looked at by EA for the RFCC, to see if funding could be drawn down which could then potentially be used for other coast/flood defence schemes in Essex.

MJ advised that Karen Thomas would be returning to work in the Autumn following her maternity leave – Members asked for their regards to be passed on.

SMP Change Process - A paper had been previously circulated to the ECF which had resulted in mixed feedback which had been listened to. A revised paper was nearing completion and would ensure that appropriate democratic processes were followed.

4. Essex Coastal Forum Forward Plan

NS advised that a number of potential actions had been derived from stakeholder input into the Coastal Visioning exercise at last year's conference – these had been circulated to ECF members in advance of the meeting. Members were asked to consider whether they agreed with the actions and, as these had been derived purely from stakeholder input, whether there were any additional actions which Members felt should be added.

SS suggested that it was not necessarily the actions which had been identified which was the issue, but the prioritisation which should be attached to them. MJ commented that many of the potential actions were very aspirational with a lot of commonality between them. He also suggested that a number of them were already being taken forward and had links to other plans. A tick box/scoring/RAG format was proposed by SS so that those potential actions which were realistic (or not) could be clearly identified.

It was agreed that the potential actions should be re-circulated in tabular form and that all ECC members should review and advise of work already being undertaken

Action : NS – to circulate the potential actions in a revised tabular format

Action : All – to comment on stakeholder derived potential actions, once re-circulated, to both clarify links with existing work and to prioritise

ME emphasised the need to create both mainstream and specialised jobs to improve the strength of local communities and that it was important to enable local people to acquire the skills to deliver these jobs.

The socio-economics associated with the grant funding of any schemes would mean that the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) could have a great contribution to make. It was felt that it might be appropriate for Kent and Essex to consider coastal defence issues together through the LEP coastal officer group. The issues with undefined boundaries were discussed, along with the lack of commonality of issues in some areas of North Essex with the rest of the SE LEP area - views were expressed that these might have more in common with the Suffolk LEP.

ME suggested that it might be appropriate for minutes of the Coastal LEP Officer Group to be circulated to the ECF. The importance of linking to the Integrated County Strategy was also highlighted as this would enable funding to be drawn down.

Action : NS to ascertain how many of the 28 prioritised project in the Integrated County Strategy (ICS) related to the coast and communities of Essex

Once the potential actions had been prioritised, and links with the ICS explored an “Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Master Plan” could be developed. This could be beneficial, as a minimum, as a signposting exercise so that if specific elements came forward it would be possible to review the matrix to identify other linked deliverables and potential lead partners.

KH highlighted a potential timing issue e.g. if linking with Local Development Plans over the next 4-5 years.

5. Essex Coastal Conference 2012

NS advised that the theme for this year’s conference is “Coastal Economy and Regeneration” and that the conference would be taking place at the end of September. The programme and booking form would be circulated to members once available.

6. Essex Coastal Warden Scheme

The scheme, funded through ECC’s involvement in the EU Interreg IVb North Sea Programme’s SUSCOD Project, was progressing well. The Conservation Volunteers (previously British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) had been awarded the contract. It was hoped that the scheme would be ready for launch in September.

7. Regular agenda items

a. Reports from meetings attended

Essex Flood Management Partnership

It was noted that this group also considered some coastal issues, specifically where coastal flooding and surface/fluvial flooding can interact and cause ‘tidelocking’.

Coastal Renaissance Partnership Board

MJ felt that a visit by the ECF to Tendring to hear about the challenges faced by TDC and how to take forward would be useful.

Action : HR/NS to liaise with Cllr Neil Stock to arrange a future visit by the ECF to Clacton and to include a site visit

Post Meeting Note : Cllr Stock has announced his intention to step down as Leader of Tendring Council Council and hence, if appropriate, liaison with the new TDC Leader will be undertaken instead

Local Government Association Coastal Special Issues Group AGM

Site visits were particularly interesting including to West Wittering where a good example of partnership funding contributing to flood defence scheme had been explained and visited by Members (though it was noted this was in a very affluent area and hence the situation could differ considerably to Essex coastal communities). Also a caravan park privately funding (at a cost of £17.8 million) its own coast defence scheme was visited.

b. Issues or best practice examples for Forum's attention

Scarborough had recently been commended for their work re how to engage with communities.

Alde Ore Futures – looking to raise £10 million over 10 years for flood defence schemes. It was commented that this is in a very affluent area which was very different to much of Essex.

National Coast Erosion Risk Maps (NCERM) these maps which will be similar to the existing flood maps but will identify areas at risk of coast erosion are being rolled out in a phased way with a number around the country being live already. Suffolk and Essex have not yet gone live due to the delay with the SMP (no high profile launch will be undertaken). It is planned that all of the NCERM maps for the Essex and South Suffolk SMP area will go live simultaneously.

Flood Insurance The Government / Association of British Insurers' announcement re the follow up to the Statement of Particulars continues to be awaited.

c. Legislation updates

None reported to the meeting

d. Notes and Actions from last meeting

Due to a shortage of time, the action points were not individually reviewed though the minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the meeting. Action Points will be carried forward to the next meeting, or if appropriate updated in the interim.

8. Next Meeting will take place at – time to be advised

Post Meeting Note : Meeting will take place from 12.30 until 2.30pm on Wednesday 16th January 2013 in Committee Room 1 at County Hall, Chelmsford (a light lunch will be available beforehand from 12.00)

9. Summary of Action Points can be found on next page

Action	Owner(s)
Cllr J Jowers to write a letter of thanks to Marcus Pearson	JJ/NS
New system of partnership funding for flood and coastal erosion works to be added to the agenda for a future meeting	NS
Ensure RFCC agendas are circulated to the ECF and input fed through to relevant RFCC representatives	NS
Circulate the potential actions in a revised tabular format	NS
Comment on stakeholder derived potential actions, once re-circulated, to both clarify links with existing work and to prioritise	All
Ascertain how many of the 28 prioritised project in the Integrated County Strategy (ICS) related to the coast and communities of Essex	NS
Liaise with Neil Stock to arrange a future visit by the ECF to Clacton and to include a site visit	HR/NS

Action (from Jan 11 minutes)	Owner(s)	Status
NS to liaise with Marcus Pearson to arrange the next meeting and circulate relevant information to Members	Nicky Spurr	Complete
NS to amend the Terms of Reference and circulate with the minutes	Nicky Spurr	Complete
MJ to share Statement of Case with Essex Landowners Group	Mark Johnson	Complete
MJ to investigate whether the draft SMP could now be shared with landowners and others who had participated in the consultation	Mark Johnson	Complete
NS to ensure Cllr Chapman's views re SMP Change Process fed into to the EACG meeting on 3rd February 2012	Nicky Spurr	Complete
Hilary Rowlands to discuss links between the CRPB and ECF with Cllr Kevin Bentley and feedback to the next meeting of the ECF	Cllr Tracey Chapman / Hilary Rowlands	Outstanding - Hilary did we agree something on this or do you want to try action before minutes go out?
MJ to prepare a short summary re Suffolk work with caravan parks which might then be taken forward by the Coastal Renaissance Partnership Board	Mark Johnson / Hilary Rowlands	Any progress or shall I chase Mark?
NH and NS to liaise re potential to use EU funding through Floodcom to increase awareness of flood risk in Essex Caravan Parks	Nick Humfrey / Nicky Spurr	outstanding