

**Minutes of Meeting held on 8 November 2018  
at Council Chamber, Suffolk Coastal District  
Council**



In attendance:

AA		Alison	Andrews	AOEP		PG		Peter	Garret	MSBDC
PC		Peter	Cosgrove	AONB / Pioneer		DRo	Cllr	David	Rose	MSBDC
NCri		Nick	Crick	BCP		GM		Giles	Merritt	NE
RS		Richard	Steward	BEP		RW		Rob	Wise	NFU
SB		Sharon	Bleese	CPE		NCol		Nick	Collinson	NT
BP		Bill	Parker	CPE		SZ		Sarah	Zins	RDA
LW		Lucy	Williams	CPE (minutes)		GH		Graham	Henderson	SCAR
CB	Cllr	Christine	Block	DEP		JB		Jane	Burch	SCC
GW		Gary	Watson	EA		AJAS	Cllr	Andy	Smith	SCDC
JG		Julian	Gregory	EIFCA		DR	Cllr	David	Ritchie	WDC (chair)

Apologies: Simon Amstutz (AONB), Sarah Barker (IBC), Edward Greenwell (AOEP), John Jackson (NE), Eleanor Johnson (MMO), Andy Millar (NE) Jane Skepper, Karen Thomas (WMA), Tamzen Pope (CPE)

1.	Welcome and introductions	The Chairman shared a round of introductions with the group.
2.	Review of the conference	<p>The conference this year had over 200 delegates and 35 students. Feedback was good and encouraged similar for the future. Sponsorship of the conference resulted in the event being entirely funded with excess of £193 towards 2019 conference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant resource needed to pull the conference together. Possible support needed from LGA – suggestion for support from consultant or contractor?</li> <li>• Other items to consider for next year: Brexit / Elections / FCERM / Climate Change / Energy (though broad) / Tourism / Funding / Representative from another area to share a case study / Sir James Bevan / Discussion of linking with Norfolk or Essex – general consensus for North Essex and with NT combined strategy / Adaptation and RobGoodliffe</li> <li>• Students on stage outlining their desires for the future: farmers / youth parliament / environment / engineer – suggestion that for meaningful contribution they would need to be post school / at least 18-20. Suggestion to link them to workshop.</li> <li>• Request for more networking time.</li> <li>• DR requested a PM workshop, and enjoyed the PM KNS.</li> <li>• Workshop output –make pre requisite to share learning afterwards.</li> <li>• What do the sponsors value? Great PR / Great social responsibility / access to NGOs</li> </ul>
3.	Coast path in Suffolk update	Giles Merritt (Lead Adviser England Coast Path Delivery (Norfolk and Suffolk Team) shared with the forum the work on the path between Harwich and Shotley Gate. Mr Merritt has been working on the Deben area since August 2018. The group heard that the path delivery team are working with partners in relation to the SMPs.

		<p>The group discussed flood walls that are in varying condition, and learned that those that become unwalkable have the route brought inland and around the obstruction.</p> <p>‘Margins’ and ‘roll-back’ were discussed by the group. Margins are useable areas but there are exceptions.</p> <p>The use of the Orwell Bridge was agreed by the group to be dangerous and should not be considered part of the coast path. Mr Merritt advised the group that they are reviewing their discretion to recommend crossing the estuaries by ferry. The decision is expected in December.</p> <p>Regarding saltmarsh and mudflats Section 25A allows exclusions for coastal access on these sites. An example of use of these sites for grazing or samphire were not excluded.</p> <p>Orford Ness was a preferred by the group to be an exclusion zone, and Mr Merritt agreed that it could become a nature conservation exclusion.</p> <p>The group highlighted the maps which seem to cause confusion because the key and designations are not specific enough. The group agreed that messaging is critical for managing foot fall. A query was raised about the legislation being fit for purpose but Mr Merritt advised that it was and they do have discretion and will choose the least restrictive option where they can.</p> <p>Regarding the Aldeburgh – Hopton queries and comments included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MOD site, NE are aware of this.</li> <li>- Bailey Bridge remedial works. RW shared that the County should ask NE to pay for the remedial works.</li> </ul> <p>The group discussed the Sweetman case, which was felt to be sufficient for Suffolk estuaries. This case was about cables under an estuary causing damage to a mussel bed and resulted in the need for consultation at an earlier stage in the process.</p> <p>The group requested to view the document before publishing, so that they can advise in advance of public consultation. Mr Merritt advised that the published proposals go to the Secretary of State first and then to an 8 week public consultation.</p> <p>A query was raised with Mr Merritt, what proportion of objectives were upheld by Natural England. Mr Merritt agreed to find out.</p> <p><b>Action: Regarding the proportion of objections by landowners that were upheld by Natural England – Mr Merritt agreed to find out.</b></p>
4.	FCERM strategy review	<p>BP updated the group on the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy review. The forum heard that he and other officers had fed in to different aspects of the strategy review. It was noted that this strategy review should be open for public consultation in the new year and will go to parliament in July 2019.</p> <p>The group learned of the areas that had been championed by local government officers, so that the next FCERM strategy would support</p>

		<p>coastal communities. The ambition is a work in progress but the themes appear to focus on society, economy and environment.</p> <p>The forum agreed that it was important to collectively respond to the consultation. The group discussed the importance of managing water properly with regards to floods and drought. Also discussed was the language used and the engagement group. It was noted that engagement and communication between the public and government bodies would be helpful for the learning at the SCF conference.</p> <p>The recent Committee on Climate Change had published a document “Managing the Coast in the Changing Climate” that had been circulated. BP recommended reading this report, which was well timed to feed in to the FCERM strategy review.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> The forum felt that it would be useful to include engagement as part of the SCF conference activities – SB / LW</p>
5.	Updates	<p>a. <u>Suffolk Saltmarsh Group</u> The group heard that the last meeting was in October and discussions had involved licensing, funding, engagement, value of saltmarsh as ecosystem service, and that the group were working towards an action plan. The group learned that putting figures on the value of saltmarsh was difficult but that a methodology was under development. The group heard about how this work is forming part of the Defra Marine Pioneer which was testing the natural capital approach to inform decision making.</p> <p>b. <u>House of Lords Select Committee on Coastal Regeneration</u> SB informed the group that by request of the Select Committee the SIG organised a workshop for Leaders and Chief Executives to focus on regenerating seaside towns. 22 local authorities were represented, and with 9 Lords facilitating the tables. There was good feedback. The group noted that the Committee would submit their report to Government in March 2019. AJAS shared with the group that such a group had not met before but they felt that it would be helpful to connect again in the future for discussions. An idea of the coastal areas being an economic entity in their own right had formed and would be a good way to support coastal resorts.</p>
6.	Partner summaries	<p>Updates further to the written summary:</p> <p>AOEP – the forum heard that final costs for estuary works would soon be available and would be submitted to the EA for funding and permission.</p> <p>SOEMG – Peter Garrett elected as new Chair of the group. The group heard that Babergh DC were mapping assets, threats and opportunities.</p> <p>BEP – the Forum noted the new Chairman, James Darkins.</p> <p>WMA – The group learned of the success for the Benacre project which would get levy funding from RFCC. The preference was for a realignment scheme at this site. It was noted that the SCC Head of Environment Strategy was also looking for funding that would support protecting road infrastructure. JB highlighted the link between water management and flood management.</p> <p>CPE – the forum noted that very soon the contract for the Bawdsey work would be awarded. Regarding the Corton area the Outline Business Case would start early next year. The Forum heard about the recent Statement</p>

		<p>of Common Ground which allowed planners from neighbouring coastal authorities to discuss coastal planning and to agree a consistent approach. BP agreed to circulate the statement of common ground. EA – regarding Slaughden, the haul road had gone but the beach was currently wide.</p> <p>LGA Coastal SIG – a recent study tour to Lewes District Council involved visiting Rampion Wind Farm. AJAS informed the group of the mitigation from the Wind Farm operators of ~£12m which was based on tourism and the environment. The group discussed whether mitigation such as this was advisory only.</p> <p>EIFCA – the EIFCA update had unfortunately been left off the final print version of the conference pack and would be circulated to the group separately. JG highlighted to the group the different ways of managing fisheries with reference to natural capital.</p> <p><b><u>Action:</u> Circulate the recently completed Statement of Common Ground to the SCF – BP / LW</b></p>
7.	Previous minutes	The previous minutes were approved with no amendments.
8.	Any other business	<p><u>Jane Burch's last meeting</u> The Chairman shared with the group that this was the final meeting for Jane Burch who had started the group some years ago. It was felt that starting the Suffolk Coast Forum was one of her lasting legacies. Jane shared with the group that she and some of the councillors saw value in linking the local and national groups for learning and information sharing. The group thanked Jane for her excellent work over the years and comments included that Jane was “a force to be reckoned with”.</p> <p><u>2019 Elections</u> The group discussed the elections next year and the councillors that are expecting to stand. With fewer councillors next year, the forum noted the uncertainty. It was felt that the importance of an elected Member was needed for the length of coastline and range of issues and discussions on the SCF agenda. The group heard that Elected Members are only eligible to sit on the SCF if they are both on the Cabinet. It was noted that the councils had recently considered Member representation on organisations and that the SCF should consider highlighting the importance of two Council representatives to the council.</p> <p><b><u>Action:</u> The request for details of Member representation would be circulated soon and it is important to highlight the need for Members representation from each end of Suffolk. This may come to JB or LW.</b></p>
		Close
		<p><u>Date of 2019 meetings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 7th February (Lakeside Room, Thorpeness Golf Club, IP16 4NH)</li> <li>• Thursday 13th June (Deben Room, East Suffolk House, IP12 1RT)</li> <li>• Wednesday 13th November (Deben Room, East Suffolk House, IP12 1RT)</li> </ul>