

SEVERN ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

Management Group Meeting

Monday 16th January 2012

10:00, Gloucestershire County Council, Shire Hall

Draft Minutes



Chair: George Ashworth, Monmouthshire County Council (GA)

ACTION

Attendees:

Rhoda Ballinger, Cardiff University (RB)
Rhys Morgan, Environment Agency (RM)
Rob Niblett, Gloucestershire County Council (RN)
Paul Parker, Severn Estuary Partnership (PP)
Martin Quaile, SEP Chair (MQ)

1. Apologies for absence

Rebecca Seaman, Somerset County Council (RS)

2. Minutes from previous Management Group Meeting (10th October 2011)

The Minutes from the 10th October 2011 were accepted, with minor amendments, as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

All

Action Number	ACTIONS from 10/10/11	Progress
11/28	GA to write to John Parkes, Head of School, Earth and Ocean Sciences to support an upgrade of Paul Parker's contract.	Agenda Item – Action ASAP – RB to lead Cannot change contract but can make discretionary payment
11/30	PP to compile a list of LA members/officers who have been engaged with SEP	Complete
11/31	PP to compile a list of SEP benefits etc (obligation to look at ICZM, promoting cross border working) and to circulate around SEP MG for comment	Complete
11/32	PP to visit SEP LA partners to renew acquaintances and revitalise SEP's image	Complete
11/33	PP to compile a list of the JAC attendees over last 2 years and circulate to MG members	Ongoing
11/40	SEP staff subgroup to meet and discuss future staffing for 2012/13	Need to arrange meeting data ASAP

		– see agenda item 4
11/41	RB to circulate draft IMCORE extension bid to SEP MG members	Complete
11/42	PP to meet with interested parties and engage SEP partners to discuss development of partnership in Spring 2012	Outstanding
11/43	GO to liaise with NDASCG regarding website hosting and associated costs	Ongoing
11/44	RB to liaise with ASERA regarding future staffing arrangements	Complete - Agenda
11/45	PP to circulate draft State of the Severn Estuary Report to all SEP Members for comment	Agenda
11/46	PP/GO to look into potential uses of Social Networking sites and internal members forums	Ongoing
11/47	RM to organise an internal meeting to discuss future reporting of SOSER and develop a short paper for the SEP MG for discussion	Completed discussion – meeting with SEP 17.01.12 – send paper with minutes
11/48	SEP to contact RTP1 regarding joint conference/forum event	Agenda Item
11/49	RN to send PP contact details for Planning Spectrum Bristol PINs	Outstanding
11/50	PP to present outputs of the Time and Tide Conference to the SEP MG	Complete
11/51	PP to present outputs of the CPN Annual Forum to the SEP MG	Complete
11/52	PP to ask Rebecca Seaman to host next MG Meeting	Somerset County Council to host next MG meeting
11/53	PP to circulate foreword meeting dates to SEP MG members for agreement	Agenda item

4. SEP Financial Position & staffing update (including ASERA implementation Officer) RB

RB presented the SEP financial position and informed the MG that an end of year statement will follow. RB informed members that SEP are on budget for 2011/12 thanks to the support of the European INTERREG Projects (IMCORE and DeltaNet).

With regards to next financial year, it was noted that question-marks exist over LA contributions. It was, therefore, agreed that future staffing should be discussed within the SEP staffing subgroup ASAP. Currently, SEP core funds pay for 1.5 staff members per year. The MG were hopeful that partner contributions would continue to cover this in 2012/13.

ASERA and RB are currently finalising the ASERA implementation officer contract at 2 days a week. A draft agreement is now ready to be signed. A 1 year contract has been agreed and further discussions will commence regarding onward employment hours etc. when the new ASERA Chair is in position, November 2012.

IMCORE extension funding: RB reiterated that IMCORE have applied for

extension funding. RB suggested that she should know if they have been successful later this week. Once this decision is known, a subgroup meeting will be necessary to discuss future staffing as these potential funds could significantly alter future SEP activities.

RM informed members that The Environment Agency have an under spend this year. Therefore an additional £8,100 has been sought to support the further development and dissemination of the SOSER.

An EA annual contribution of £9000 core funding will be invoiced as usual.

The SEP continue to offer secretariat services to the BC SECG. A further £10,000 will be invoiced to carry on Secretariat services and SEP's support for this group. Currently approx. £5,000 of the original £10,000 budget has been spent, however it is envisaged that additional work on behalf of the BC SEG may be necessary in due course.

The SEP also continues to offer Secretariat services to the SECG. It is envisaged that this will be invoiced at the same rate as last year, £5,150 for 2012/13.

PP suggested that SEP LA subscriptions should remain frozen for 2012/13. The Management Group agreed and asked Paul to contact LA's and raise invoices, as appropriate. Current income from LA's and EA will, therefore, amount to approximately £33,000 for next financial year.

It was reported that PP and RB had met with the Deputy Head of Finance, John Newton at Cardiff University to discuss SEP's accounts. In this meeting it had been confirmed that no top slicing will occur. John also suggested that SEP should utilise Cardiff University's charitable status in terms of innovation and engagement. PP and RB will follow this up. It was also suggested that SEP's links with Cardiff University should be further promoted and utilised.

Cllr Quaile noted that:

1. Swansea City Council is keen to become a member of SEP as a LA. Swansea City Council will contact SEP directly.
2. Very good coverage on North side of the estuary but poorer coverage on South side of estuary. Need stronger representation. PP offered to look into this and promote stronger LA and University representation on the South of the estuary. Discussions regarding coverage on the South of the estuary in terms of local authorities and universities ensued.
3. Very pleasing that Cardiff University are so supportive, but important not to drive away other organisations / Universities. The MG felt that the relationship with SEP's host organisation should not drive other University partners away and agreed that other academic institutions should be encouraged to join.

PP also reported that there had been some interest from ABP Wales in further involvement in SEP. To this end PP will meet with ABP Wales to discuss future working opportunities and mutual benefits.

Action 12/01: PP to contact LA's regarding annual contributions and raise invoices accordingly

Action 12/02: PP to promote SEP's activities on the South of the estuary to

encourage membership

5. SEP Future Direction

All

• Meeting Schedule

PP presented a draft future meeting schedule which was amended and agreed – The Future Meeting Schedule can be accessed at:
<http://www.severnestuary.net/sep/partnership/diary.html>

A discussion ensued regarding the frequency of JAC meetings with a proposal to reduce meetings to one PA although it was noted that 2 meetings aid development of SEP direction and information exchange. A meeting is also necessary for ASERA and SECG Management Groups.

Action 12/03: PP to look into JAC CORE members and develop a list

After considerable discussions it was agreed by the MG that there would only be one JAC meeting per year and that this would be held in May. However, it was agreed that this would not preclude an option to hold an emergency JAC after the forum, should important decisions/direction be required, A Joint Estuaries Day will still be hosted in November however the usual ASERA and SECG meetings will be joined by a SEP MG meeting not a JAC.

Action 12/04: PP to amend future meeting dates and circulate to E-News and all additional distribution groups

• Future Funding

See agenda item 4 for information regarding Membership and Partner contributions.

RB informed members that JR and RB have submitted a CCW funding bid for climate change related work. They are still waiting to hear the outcome of the bid.

• UWE Support

PP outlined that he had been having discussions with UWE, Dr Owain Jones, with regards to additional resources for the development of SEP, including office support, meeting space and future research bids (ESRC).

It was proposed and agreed that a meeting between Owain Jones and RB, PP and RM take place on Tuesday 24th January at 10am.

• Workshop Outputs and Work Priorities

PP presented a document (attached) outlining the main workshop outputs from the JAC, November 2011. A brief discussion centered around the opportunities and suggested priorities ensued.

Cllr Quail suggested that small site visits (e.g. Cardiff Barrage / Sharpness docks) would encapsulate a lot of docks infrastructure and aid the understanding of SEP members. It was agreed that hands on experience would be beneficial and enjoyed by a lot of members.

Discussions regarding the promotion of a number of afternoon/evening study visits (including Cardiff barrage, history of Sharpness Docks, Cardiff ramblers and Flatholm) ensued. Geographic spread around the Estuary was deemed to be important. PP offered to look into the development of such study visits.

Action 12/05: SEP to develop 3 – 4 study visits (PA) hosted by members and promoted through SEP website etc. Summer 2012

6. Priority SEP Staff Tasks

PP

- **Severn Tidings (Winter 2011/12) Draft**

PP presented a draft contents list of *Severn Tidings* for comment. It was agreed that development of the winter edition of *Severn Tidings* would continue, with distribution proposed for February 2012.

RM suggested including a link to the 2012 Severn Bore dates.

- **Partner/Potential Partner Meetings**

See agenda item 4.

- **Marine Planning Update (MMO/WG)**

PP informed the MG that a draft paper had been prepared jointly by SEP and Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum, explaining the work of coastal partnerships in Wales and outlining potential joint working opportunities in terms of marine planning and MCZs. The paper has been sent to the Environment Minister and relevant officers, including those working on the Natural Environment Framework, requesting a future meeting.

- **Website development (incl. NDASCG)**

It was noted that GO has been developing a quote for the North Devon and Somerset Coastal group for hosting and developing their website. The chair of the coastal group and GO are currently in discussions regarding the specification and associated quote.

- **SOSER completion**

It was noted that the SOSER was at the printers, with the final .pdf and hard copies expected by 20.01.11. A press statement and launch will then follow.

RM informed members that the EA Director (Wales) has requested a copy.

There was further discussion regarding the development and dissemination of the report, as summarised below:

Next Stage: A key question considered was 'How to update this baseline report?' It was noted that it is too resource intensive and unnecessary to go through the same process and level of work again. The 2012_update will therefore be in the

form of report cards. There will be an attempt to be more technical on some aspects as well as identifying and reporting on key indicators. There will also be an effort to look at trends to inform management of the estuary.

The first stage of the development of the 2012 reporting was agreed to be the selection of key sections to update. Each of these will then require the identification of key indicators and sources. Once a structure is in place (in terms of themes, indicators and data sources), it was agreed that subsequent updates should be much simpler and less resource intensive.

The 2012 report cards will be produced September 2012 (2011 data in new format). Continued development meetings between EA and SEP are ongoing.

Dissemination of report:

Hard copies of the report will be disseminated to county libraries, Local Authorities and members of the MG – a list will be placed on the website alongside the online report. Additional hard copies will be sent to the EA and contributors. It was also suggested that the Welsh Government and MMO receive a hard copy of the report, (Julia Williams and Martyn Youell).

- **DeltaNet Activities**

PP offered a brief update on the INTERREG DeltaNet project, informing members that the next meeting will be held in May 2012. Further information regarding project outputs and progress to date can be found at: <http://www.deltanet-project.eu/>

- **IMCORE Web Developments**

The IMCORE web-pages on the SEP website have undergone significant development. The main project website and coastaladapt.eu have also been developed. All updates will be completed in February 2012.

Comments on the following web pages are welcomed by Rhoda Ballinger (Ballingerrc@cardiff.ac.uk)

SEP IMCORE - <http://www.severnestuary.net/sep/imcore/index.html>

IMCORE - <http://www.imcore.eu/>

Coastal Adapt - <http://www.coastaladaptation.eu/index.php/en/>

RB suggested that there may now be a need to develop SEP web pages in a similar style to the SEP – IMCORE pages. It was suggested to discuss the SEP website in detail at the next MG meeting.

- **Severn Estuary Forum**

A brief discussion regarding the **2012 Severn Estuary Forum** was held, with members agreeing on **Friday 28th of September** as the proposed date. It was also suggested that SEP talk with UWE regarding the possibility of jointly hosting the event. PP offered to explore the options and draft ideas for a programme for discussion at the next MG meeting.

Action 12/06: PP to develop Forum outline for next MG meeting

- JAC

See agenda item 5.

7. Progress on Projects

All

ASERA:

PP circulated draft minutes from the ASERA AGM for information and comment. He also informed the MG that Fiona Bowles has stepped down as Chair with the role now being shared between Nick Michael, Gary Kennison and Matthew Lewis. He also explained that the Implementation Officer, Christine Marsh, would be returning from maternity leave in April. It is hoped that a finalised Management Scheme can be adopted at the 2012 AGM (November).

BCSEG:

RM reported that the BC SEG are continuing work as normal, with work on the development of the website, including upload of documents, being completed. A communication test and exercise are planned for later this year. It is also hoped that a joint exercise with ABP Wales can be undertaken.

However there are fairly major work programme issues which will be discussed shortly regarding the need for a Severn Estuary Scientific advice paper on oil spill response. It is possible that a consultant will be utilised to produce this.

Website Activity:

PP presented a paper offering a brief overview of the SEP website, showing traffic and visitor numbers. Recent and future tasks were also identified. A copy of this paper can be found appended to these minutes.

Action 12/07: GO to circulate visitor numbers for the SEP Gateway website around the MG (Appendix 3)

8. Any other Relevant Business

All

Cllr Quaile:

Cllr Quaile drew the Management Group's attention to the the Forest of Dean District Council's and Gloucester Harbour Trustees' concerns regarding the upper-part of the estuary in terms of overhanging trees in relation to river bank scouring and associated damage. It was noted that Gloucester City Council will be taking action to cut these trees back.

Cllr Quaile also noted that there have also been concerns by County Councils regarding what the EA were talking about in terms of the FRMS. With specific concerns from the farming community in terms of flooding of land and property. This had led to Gloucestershire County Council scoping a meeting with the EA to discuss a vast range of points from a wide range of organisations and people. The task group meeting had been held on the 29th November. Anybody from NFU through to local interested parties, councillors, farmers, senior officers and Joe Martin (EA) had been invited to comment. A paper was written for cabinet to look at. PP has copy of this document which can be shared amongst MG members.

The third consultation for flood management of the river is imminent and the EA have responded to all recommendations (MQ to provide response paper). The EA will work with all parishes along the river, looking at the recommendations and issues. Concerns regarding communication were raised by Cllr Quaile. It is important that local residents have access to the correct information. It was, therefore, suggested that a short article be written in Severn Tidings, directing interested parties to these relevant documents.

Action 12/08: Cllr Quaile to send PP EA public document (FRMS – Task Group)

Action 12/09: SEP to upload documents (FRMS – Task Group) and link in E-News and Severn Tidings

Electronic Meetings – Video conference:

Discussions ensued regarding the use of electronic meetings, v/c and tele-conference instead of physical meetings. It was agreed that for the current set of meetings it is necessary to have face to face meetings. However if any intermediate meetings are required then V/C should be considered as a viable option.

9. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

All

Monday 16th April 2012, 10:00, Somerset County Council

Action Number	ACTIONS from 16/01/12	Progress
11/28	GA to write to John Parkes, Head of School, Earth and Ocean Sciences to support an upgrade of Paul Parker's contract.	Agenda Item – Action ASAP – RCB to lead Cannot change contract but can make discretionary payment
11/33	PP to compile a list of the JAC attendees over last 2 years and circulate to MG members	Ongoing
11/42	PP to meet with interested and engage SEP partners to discuss development of partnership in Spring 2012	Outstanding
11/43	GO to liaise with NDASCG regarding website hosting and associated costs	Ongoing
11/46	PP/GO to look into potential uses of Social Networking sites and internal members forums	Ongoing
11/49	RN to send PP contact details for Planning Spectrum Bristol PINs	Outstanding
12/01	PP to contact LA's regarding annual contributions and raise invoices accordingly	
12/02	PP to promote SEP's activities on the South of the estuary to encourage membership	
12/03	PP to look into JAC CORE members and develop a list	
12/04	PP to amend future meeting dates and circulate to E-News and all additional	

	distribution groups	
12/05	SEP to develop 3 – 4 study visits (PA) hosted by members and promoted through SEP website etc. Summer 2012	
12/06	PP to develop Forum outline for next MG meeting	
12/07	GO to circulate visitor numbers for the SEP Gateway website around the MG	
12/08	Cllr Quaile to send PP EA public document (FRMS – Task Group)	
12/09	SEP to upload documents (FRMS – Task Group) and link in E-News and Severn Tidings	

Appendix 1:

Priority and development suggestions from JAC Workshop 8th November 2011:

Identified priority themes – see action table for additional detail:

- 5.0 Marketing
- 7.0 Delivery of Key Roles
- 9.0 Adding Value and Filling Gaps
- 10.0 Ensuring Effective Communication between Organisations and Individuals

Key Benefits of SEP:

- Facilitates coordination between estuary users – recognises whole estuary
- One-stop-shop on Estuary matters
 - Contacts database
 - Communication outputs and mechanisms
 - Website
- Neutral and informed Secretariat role
- Networking
- Cost effective

Concerns:

- Limited engagement with local, grass roots organisations
- Lack of perceived clarity of SEP's role
- Funding streams and statutory responsibilities of some organisation limits their ability to provide core funding – project based funding
- Too strategic
- Lack of common cause to untie and stimulate organisations
- Lack of awareness of SEP
- Not all LA's are members- limits involvement
- Resources

Opportunities and suggested priorities:

- Extend annual forum to 2 days
- Create simple guide to SEP for new members
- Utilise free venues for meetings such as Yacht clubs and members
- Consider meeting distribution, is two JAC's a year too many, does this lead to lower attendance?
- Promote more effective local stakeholder involvement in relevant consultations

- Develop clear rules of engagement
- Encourage greater integration and communication between organisations in providing information on estuary-wide matters
- Engage more fully with local users
- Develop a glossary of acronyms
- Further utilisation of student resource
- Develop partnerships with other universities around the estuary – encourage student led research
- Site visits – encouraging the partners to offer semi regular site visits around the estuary – SOSER visit for each theme?
- Develop a map for general public, e.g. tourism, sites of interest etc.
- Continue website development
- Continue development of communication mechanisms, E-News, Newsletter, Social Networking etc.

Appendix 2:

Severn Estuary Partnership Website Activity Report

Website traffic 12/10/2011 - 13/01/2012

3,865 Visits

2,450 Unique Visitors

12,631 Pageviews

3.27 Pages/Visit

00:02:52 Avg. Time on Site

53.89% Bounce Rate

57.54% % New Visits



■ 57.57% New Visitor
2,225 Visits

■ 42.43% Returning Visitor
1,640 Visits

Comparison 2010/2011

Jan 1, 2011 - Dec 31, 2011

16,621

Jan 1, 2010 - Dec 31, 2010

13,237

Website Traffic for 2011

16,621 Visits

10,488 Unique Visitors

47,418 Pageviews

2.85 Pages/Visit

00:02:40 Avg. Time on Site

55.41% Bounce Rate

60.49% % New Visits



■ 60.50% New Visitor
10,055 Visits

■ 39.50% Returning Visitor
6,566 Visits

Recent tasks:

Update of the FRMS website for the Environment Agency

Development of the IMCORE website hosted by SEP

Ongoing SEP website duties (E-News; updates; development; update of group diaries, agendas and minutes; creation of SOSER page)

Future tasks:

Updating and development of the BCSEG website
Costing of Migration of the ND&SCG website to be hosted by SEP
Conclusion of the IMCORE website hosted by SEP
Update of ASERA Members' area (Diary; Agendas; Minutes; Reports)
Ongoing SEP website duties (E-News, updates, development)

Appendix 3:

Top 10 Most Viewed Web Pages 12/10/2011 to 13/01/2012

Page	Pageviews ↓
1. SEP Home Page	1,001
2. Gateway Page	833
3. /sep/resource.html	548
4. /frms/publications.html	454
5. /sep/estuary/maps.html	436
6. /secg/smpr.html	430
7. /secg/index.html	378
8. /sep/imcore/index.html	374
9. /secg/	336
10. /frms/index.html	326