

**THE WASH AND NORTH NORFOLK COAST EMS
FULL MANAGEMENT GROUP (FMG) MEETING**

18th April 2007 at 10.30 a.m.

at

**The Water-Level Management Alliance,
Kettlewell House, Austin Fields, King's Lynn, PE30 1PH
(formerly The King's Lynn Consortium of IDBs)**

Attendees:

Mat Mander (Chair - Eastern Sea Fisheries Joint Committee)
Cllr Paul Espin (South Holland District Council)
Tim Venes (Norfolk Coast Partnership Project Officer)
Gemma Cousins (King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council)
Bridget Lascelles (King's Lynn Conservancy Board)
Roger Ward (Chair King's Lynn and West Norfolk Advisory Group)
Diane Fairchild (South Holland District Council)
Michael Rooney (Natural England)
Cllr Sheila Roy (Lincolnshire County Council)
Jon Watson (Lincolnshire County Council)
George Dann (Water Management Alliance)
Thomas Roberts (UCL)
Judith Stoutt (Eastern Sea Fisheries Joint Committee)
Horace Wright (Boston Borough Council)
Bryan Bowles (Chair Boston Advisory Group)
Rick Keymer (Natural England)
Conor Donnelly (Natural England)
John Cooper (Defence Estates)
Cllr Tony Wright (Norfolk County Council)
Cllr Janice Eells (Norfolk County Council)
John Jones (Vice chair - Norfolk County Council)
Jen Ashworth (Natural England)
Manfai Tang (Environment Agency)
Sarah Williams (Groundwork Trust)
David Pocklington (East Lindsey District Council)
Peter Rushmer (Project Manager)

1.1 Apologies:

Cllr. Peter Bedford (Boston Borough Council)
Cllr. Jenny Rowe (South Holland District Council)
Mark Randell (Chair elect, North Norfolk Coast Advisory Group)
Cllr. Brian Long (King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council)
Tammy Smalley (Wash Estuary Strategy Project Officer)
David Batchelor (Defence Estates)
Capt. Richard Walker (Port of Boston)
Cllr. Tony Turner (Lincolnshire County Council)
Cllr. Archie Saul (East Lindsey District Council)
Cllr. Bernard Crowe (North Norfolk District Council)
Chris Yardley (North Norfolk District Council)
Cpt. John Lorking (King's Lynn Conservancy Board)
Cllr. Richard Rockcliffe (King's Lynn Conservancy Board)
Patricia Beaton (Boston Borough Council)
Cllr. Richard Leggott (Boston Borough Council)

Tony Pannell (Wells Harbour Commissioners)
Peter Harvey (Fenland District Council)
Peter Riches (Crown Estates)
Richard Seppings (Common Rightholders)
Mike Parker (Defra Fisheries)
Geoff Bowles (Defra)

1.2 Notes of last meeting and matters arising -

PR advised that Annual Report 2006 and Action Plan were on the website in draft.

DF picked up on the access incident and referred to the Government's access policy and coastal path proposals, emphasising concern about additional impact in areas already under pressure.

PE asked where we were with the Management Scheme review. PR responded that it was tied up with conservation objectives' review. We were waiting till these were completed and condition assessment made, then we could finalise in the light of known condition; it may be next year before we can do so. PR noted MM had sent a letter of thanks to Godfrey Sayers for his valuable contribution chairing the North Norfolk Coast Advisory Group over the years, following his stepping down. Mark Randell was the new Chair.

2. Conservation Objectives (CO) review:

2.1 Progress update and programme for completion:

CD reviewed the January 23rd Intertidal Flats workshop and outcome. It was an important and successful meeting with a common understanding between specialist participants. It had been noted Mussel/cockle beds were recovering with sustainable measures in place. ESFJC felt CO targets high, but there was acceptance that if sustainable management was in place and target not attained, this would not count as failure. A definition of what is a bed and what is not was also explained. CD said there was more to do though. The modelling that is going on will feed into this.

CD then tabled a draft outline timetable for completion of the CO review. Discussion followed. RW asked if the model of workshop would be useful for other conservation interest features

CD said it had worked well for cockles and mussels, but was not necessarily effective for others. Some discussion was very scientific and specialist, but some about other features others was not. RW said it seemed the mechanism worked well at resolving concerns.

MM felt it was a supportive example of how this management group works; it might be worth looking at for applying to other subjects. It could even be an appropriate model for around the country that we could recommend.

RK said it might be appropriate for birds and physical features, but there are areas ESFJC do not manage though, e.g. east Wash private fishery. NE are now involved with the landowners there, who are fishery right holders.

CD explained the draft outline timetable, adding some progress had been made on the other conservation objectives, although there are still resource issues for NE.

JE asked what the internal consultation was as mentioned on timetable. PR replied this was within NE and will happen as noted at the fourth bullet point.

PE/RW both felt the suggested timescale was very tight with school holidays, etc.

RW suggested extending to end of September. MM reminded the meeting that the purpose today is to feed back comments on timetable to CD. We need to make it realistic, but achievable; it is a long process.

RK asked if NE could have help from PR with setting up. PR said definitely, subject to line management.

2.2 Condition assessment and next steps:

TV asked how complex the condition assessment would be and will there be input from groups etc.

CD said yes and as a consequence it will be the end of the year before it has been through management group, AG's etc. MM said we need to clarify this in the timetable as it is an important part of process.

RW & PE led a debate about timescale.

RW noted that at the end of the year there could then be some debate about the condition assessment.

MM emphasised that debate was important and as it will give greater credibility to outcomes.

RK said NE were very happy to listen to the meeting's views, though reminded it is EN's responsibility to do the CO review and make the Condition Assessment.

Rounding up, MM said a revised timetable will follow and urged that we stick to it.

TW asked if the Centrica cable proposals come into it and MM said we will cover that later.

3. Future of the Wash and North Norfolk Coast EMS project:

3.1 & 3.2 Recommended project direction post 31.03.08, 3rd MOA and funding '08-'11:

PR presented his outline proposal for the way ahead post March 2008, when a new Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and project manager's contract were required. He emphasised that this proposal was designed to achieve "more bang for our buck" in recognition of the fact that partners' financial resources were likely to be stretched and took account of what we had learned and achieved over recent years and what we had yet to achieve, following the most recent action plan progress review.

RW asked if we are looking to get more funding and PR said he felt we can be more effective within current resources and this is the basis for his proposal. MM emphasised we are suggesting we can do this within current funding, but RW said we need to ask if funding is going to remain and continue.

MM asked if the meeting felt the principle was right, outside of the funding issue.

RW said he had been involved from the start of the project; it had been successful and we should not under-sell it. The project has helped relevant authorities achieve their obligations and there was a balance to strike between selling this and celebrating success.

MM agreed. PR said he had recognised this in his proposal which had not lost sight of it, but was evolving from it in order to do what we knew from experience was needed.

TW asked if we are saying we will definitely have funding for the future.

PR said no; it is not guaranteed and we need that debate, but he had assumed as a baseline for planning purposes that current levels would continue.

JA supported evolution and welcomed and supported the focus on broader issues. DP said the proposal contained the suggestion to engage more with the public. If we then ask for a higher level of funding, this could encourage questions of the validity of the two projects, i.e. the WEMP and EMS. He therefore felt a step change was valid. PR agreed, saying no big change was planned.

PE suggested there had been blurring of the roles of the two groups as time has gone by. He felt we needed to consider duplication of work, where this is and redefine the remit. RK said there had been a lot of discussion about this when the project was first set up. He felt the functions of each were well defined between the two projects. The EMS project is very focused from the sea wall out, plus conservation, and WEMP looked inland. A step change with more admin support was therefore wise as it needs to be more cleverly undertaken to be effective. RK added he did not think public awareness is a thing for this project. Might need to change more radically in the future, but that is for later.

MR pointed out the EMS project also covers North Norfolk where there is clearly no overlap between the WEMP and EMS.

In response to a question from JW, PR said raising awareness of the sensitivity of the site and how the public's behaviour can affect it is a major element of the current action plan. If the group feels it is no longer important, we need to change that in subsequent reviews. He emphasised, however, that raising awareness is one of our principal tenets leading to good practice, the encouragement of which is a crucial element and important theme of the project action plan.

In response to PE's earlier point, PR said the projects were co-operative and worked in a complimentary way and he countered the suggested duplication of effort. He was firmly of the view that the EMS, Norfolk Coast Partnership (covering the Norfolk Coast AONB) and the WESG projects worked in a co-operate manner to achieve respective objectives in a mutually supportive manner, eliminating duplication.

BB pointed out there are more people coming to the area and their impact needs to be managed and their awareness raised.

JJ welcomed the proposal to review the project emphasising it was not right to go ahead without. We have to show justification of projects, so a review is appropriate; we have a duty to do so.

RW agreed re-examination was important. Having considered the proposal, he suggested the Core Management Group (CMG) be asked to work up serious recommendations and advice for the future based upon it, indicating if it was a strategic or a step change.

MM confirmed this had been the intention and the meeting agreed.

Action – CMG to work up outline proposals for evolution of the project post March 2008 and bring to the next Full Management Board (FMB) in July.

4. Plans and Projects:

4.1 Fisheries:

JS reported the mussel fishery had closed and had been successful. Natural fishery negotiations went well with NE and took account of bio-diversity interests, etc. The hand-work fishery was now open, but no uptake so far. The cockle dredge fishery came and went; it was soon taken up. The larger hand-working fishery was ongoing and has been very successful. A small area of razor fishery was open, but no uptake probably due to the success of other fisheries. It could happen in the future. MM emphasised there had been a remarkable change to the cockle fishery. The change of working had been grasped and the fishermen were open to adaptive techniques which is good for the fishery and the site.

4.2 Boal Quay Proposal:

GC agreed to report back. RW said the Ports have had some input into the complexity of leisure craft conflicting with commercial use. There was discussion about increased demand for marinas, their relevance to the local economy and potential for impact on interest features; the Plans and Projects process should address these issues at an early stage.

4.3 Environmental statement for Lincs Offshore Cable Route:

JS reviewed proposal briefly. Consultation with statutory bodies had gone ahead. The formal response period had now ended. Meetings with stakeholders will follow. DTI will have to make the final consideration.

TW expressed concerns about cable laying going through the Wash and said they need to spend money to upgrade system thus enabling an alternative route.

JE said this has gone to NCC for consultation and TW went to meeting. They were told it could not be dealt with separately.

TW updated on that meeting. Opinions varied and it was down to the Leader to decide. TW was not sure what the result was. He was worried piece-meal decisions will be made that will give critical mass for the rest to be given consents.

JE felt windfarms were not what people wanted and developments are piece-meal anyway.

PE said he was against and the developers should not be here. The whole issue needed to be looked at. It will be interesting to hear what NE has to say.

GC advised that such matters were out of LA's hands over certain levels of megawatts.

RW said there is a presumption of national need and the marine environment is considered a better environment too. It is not going away and that is the problem.

There was a lot of agreement within the meeting on this.

MR said he had been involved in the ornithology elements of this matter and there are no concerns for birds regarding the cable laying. The turbines themselves are a different issue, about which NE does have concerns.

SR said wind turbines are an issue in her area too, but she is most concerned about the cable through the Wash.

JW pointed out there are financial implications in this route. They would prefer to connect through Skegness if it was more viable, but the National Grid is not set up for it. It may be easier to connect if they tinkered with the tendering.

BB considered what the Wash would get out of it and added, if nothing, we do not. It should not be going through Wash for nothing. He also wondered how safe the tunnelling was under the sea bank at the landfill.

RK said NE had taken it on through the Habitats Regulations process. Under this, any plan or project can go ahead if it does not affect the site. In other words there is a formal route to go on this. A holding objection was in place presently, put in by Natural England, who take a dim view of the proposal. They have made it clear there is a flaw in the process which has forced the developers to consider the Wash. NE have said the best place is via Skegness sub station. They have commented on various other issues on birds, marine mammals, etc.

PE and the meeting thanked Natural England and asked if their letter of objection in the public domain. RK agreed it was and would send a copy to PR to circulate.

4.4 Apache helicopter (AH) and the Wash Ranges:

PR amplified on the issue. He said as recently as last month it had been confirmed by RAF Wattisham personnel at their public Eastern Regional Forum that AH would not be using the Wash Ranges, but it had transpired that un-consulted and un-consented steady state training had been going on before then at RAF Holbeach.

This had come out following initial liaison between DE, himself and NE around Christmas time on what was then described as a proposed AH trial and in discussions since. At the time he and NE had emphasised it was necessary to consult in order for the MoD to meet its obligations as a Relevant Authority under the Habitats Regulations, etc.

PR said it was, at the very least, disappointing to have been misled when AH was a long standing issue of concern to the management group for its potential to impact on interest features and when the Action Plan contained associated actions.

PR said the issue was two-fold. Firstly, that the statutory consultative procedures applying to all relevant authorities had not been followed and, secondly, because of the potential for AH to affect favourable condition status by impacting on interest features; this impinged on the whole EMS partnership's ability and obligation to achieve favourable condition. PR also pointed out that the Environmental Statement presented by RAF Wattisham to the AH Eastern Regional Forum recognised the potential for impact and the need for assessing it under the Habitats Regulations.

JC responded saying that MOD feels, as stated in their letter to NE, that there was no obligation to consult and that in the world context they were simply moving to a new air frame, which used the Range in the same way as other makes of helicopter did. Infact they come in higher, at 1000ft, and work at 500ft. That said, a review of the activity of helicopters and a review of impact on birds, etc. will be put in place to get a full understanding of impacts.

JC also assured the meeting that the MoD does recognise their important relationship with this group and key stakeholders.

MM said it sounded like there were positive things coming out of this, but RK emphasised that the MOD are subject to the Habitats Regulations unless there are overriding reasons to the contrary and they have not even applied the Regulations yet. He said he would be writing to them.

BB said that cattle will get spooked too and TW added that they were using AH recently at Sculthorpe with terrific down draught being created.

Action - MM summarised saying we should bring the matter back to future meetings.

5. AOB:

5.1 EU Marine Strategic Directive:

Not discussed in TS' absence.

5.2 Volunteer Wardening Proposal:

PR reported he had recently held two separate meetings with the North Norfolk site managers and the Lincolnshire site managers to discuss the proposal in more detail. The North Norfolk site managers had felt their area was already well covered and that another layer of wardening might be counter-productive in their area. It was however noted in respect of Holkham and Holme that additional permanent staff would be more useful to enable full use of existing volunteers available.

The Lincolnshire/Wash wardens had recognised that the site was not so well covered from Hunstanton south and around the Wash to Gibraltar Point and it was felt that the proposal would bring distinct advantages in this area, especially for the Wash NNR.

PR would now refine the proposal in the light of these meetings and consider funding possibilities.

In this context, a possible avenue was through the Groundwork Trust who had expressed an interest in developing their activities in Norfolk. They had therefore been invited to present to this meeting to explain their remit, modus operandi and objectives and explore potential synergies.

MM then introduced Sarah Williams, Regional Development Manager of Groundwork East of England who presented on:

5.3 The work of the Groundwork Trust:

SW referred to the project in south Essex and the possibility of bringing outcomes into Norfolk. She explained Groundwork was a federation of 50 local trusts that acted as a regional level conduit between national strategy and local communities. They were core funded from government and work in partnership to improve quality of life. They use the environment to motivate people to deliver sustainable development and make environmental improvement. Groundwork does go into areas others are sometimes reluctant to go into to make things better.

Their Green Blue initiative was aimed at improving recreational activity in marine areas in South Essex. There they were working with local businesses in the marine leisure sector, to improve the environmental performance of the sector and improve competitiveness of the area and also to get young people involved.

To do so they took the marine code of practice, converted it to a “tool kit”, applied it and then scored effectiveness.

New National Lottery funding streams are due in July, focusing this year on local marine areas and their local needs, with a view to reducing the environmental impact of the sector , getting young people involved and raising awareness.

SW said she did not think this aspect needs stimulation here, but felt it did sounds like improving environmental performance could benefit.

RW asked if they they involve FE colleges and SW replied they tend to focus more on schools. RW pointed out there are new marine centres coming on stream and wondered if there is scope to develop new fisheries skills for example.

In response to TW , SW said inland waters were also considered, but the lottery funding only covers inland by 5km.

Action - MM suggested the group goes away and thinks where Groundwork can benefit various organisations and report back to PR by end of May with suggested projects for passing through to Sarah.

MM thanked SW for coming to address the meeting and for her interesting presentation .

6.1 Introduction to Thomas Roberts:

MM introduced Thomas Roberts, UCL Phd post graduate.

Tom explained he was conducting his thesis in Stakeholder Perspectives of Marine SACs and was using this EMS and the Thanet Project as case studies. He thanked MM for inviting him to sit in on this and other meetings and would be grateful to talk to various members of the Management Group/Board and Advisory Groups in due course, while shadowing the projects progress over the coming months. It was agreed he was welcome and that he should keep in touch with PR as meetings and matters developed.

6.2 Summary and dates of next meeting:

MM said it had been a full and constructive meeting once again and thanked everyone for their contributions.

He urged attendees to stay for the workshop after lunch.

Forthcoming meetings were as set at the AFMB in December (the next FMB on 10th July, FMG on 17th October and AFMB on 5th December all at the same venue).

7. Lunch followed.

8. Assessing Management Effectiveness using OSPAR (self assessment) Score Card:

After lunch Jen Ashworth, NE Marine Protected Areas Specialist was introduced , who led the above workshop

By way of introduction, JA said the World Bank Scorecard had been selected by NE as the most appropriate way of achieving this. It was a good thing to do in that it helped refine management

process and it also contributed to the OSPAR target for an ecologically coherent network of well managed marine protected areas by 2010. This area had been put forward as an OSPAR site.

JA then led the meeting through the World Bank scorecard process.

This stimulated interactive, valuable and interesting debate and helped enhance the understanding of the management process among the attendees.

At the end of this JA totalled the scores and reported a respectable 61.75% success rate (subject to confirmation) against the criteria contained in the World Bank scorecard for management of MPA's.

Those attending the workshop felt it had been an extremely interesting exercise and the result was agreed as very creditable.

JA was thanked for leading the workshop and the meeting closed

WASH & NORTH NORFOLK COAST EUROPEAN MARINE SITE
FULL MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

10th July 2006, 10.30 a.m.

Held at the offices of the Water-Level Management Alliance
(formerly the King's Lynn Consortium of IDBs)
Kettlewell House, Austin Fields
King's Lynn

MEETING NOTES

Present:

Mat Mander (Chair and Clerk and Chief Fishery Officer ESFJC)
Roger Ward (King's Lynn & West Norfolk Advisory Group)
Cllr. Tony Turner (Lincolnshire County Council)
Jon Watson (Lincolnshire County Council)
Bridget Lascelles (King's Lynn Conservancy Board)
Conor Donnelly (Natural England)
Rick Keymer (Natural England)
Tony Pannell (Wells Harbour Commissioners)
David Hawley (Environment Agency)
Lou Mayer (Water-Level Management Alliance)
Chris Yardley (North Norfolk District Council)
Capt. Richard Walker (Port of Boston)
Jeff Goodley (South Holland District Council)
Diane Fairchild (South Holland District Council)
Cllr. Brian Long (King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council)
Cllr. Tony Wright (Norfolk County Council)
Cllr. Alison Austin (Boston Borough Council)
Cllr. Gerry Clare (Boston Borough Council)
John Jones (Norfolk County Council)
Lt. Col Simon Lloyd (Defence Training Estate E England MoD)
David Batchelor (DE)
Peter Rushmer (Project Manager)

1.1 Apologies:

Tim Venes (NCP), Archie Saul (IDBs), Cllr. Peter Bedford (BBC), Cllr. K Smith (ELDC), Bev Finnegan (ELDC), John Jones (NCC), Michael Rooney (NE), Gemma Cousins (KL&W NBC), Cllr. Steve Williams (SHDC), Cllr. Janice Eells (NCC), Cllr Paul Espin (SHDC), Tammy Smalley (WESG), Capt. John Lorking (KLCB)

Welcome to Lt Col Simon Lloyd (Defence Training Estate East of England), Jeff Goodley representing SHDC, Cllr. Gerry Clare representing Cllr. Peter Bedford and new member Cllr. Alison Austin.

1.2 Notes of the last Annual Full Management Board meeting (06.12.06) :

Notes of last meeting were reviewed. Actions completed.

There was one EMS quiz entrant with the correct answers; the project manager proposed she be offered the prize. This was agreed.

2. Review of Conservation Objectives (CO) and Condition Assessment (CA):

CD advised that he had amended the timetable for completing this work since the FMG.

The key things were:

1. draft conservation objectives to be finalised by 03.08, then out for consultation to end of Sept, during which time there would be meetings with the advisories and other interested groups.
2. the subsequent draft condition assessment would be issued end Nov to Jan. for comments to be incorporated for presentation at a Core Management Group in Feb 2008.

CD added that the COs are written for each of features in EMS and at SSSI level. They are then brought together in the CA. This is a big piece of work, so he will be summarising it too. He gave an example of COs and the template used, which describes the features, then shows the targets, methods of assessment and comments.

BL asked if it can be digitally reproduced. CD agreed it could. The meeting agreed to summarise digitally. RW caveated this saying some of the advisory group members are still hardcopyists. CD confirmed he can accommodate them too. He added that meetings were planned with the advisory groups (AG) in Sept as part of the consultation.

MM congratulated CD; he had clearly been busy and we look forward to getting it out and beginning the consultation. There were no queries from attendees.

Action – CD to deliver the draft conservation objectives consultation material to the management group/board and advisory groups by early August, with follow up liaison as required, for returns by end of September.

3. The Wash and North Norfolk Coast EMS Project post 31.03.08:

Model proposed for the future:

MM referred to the papers circulated by PR in support of a proposal for staffing the project with 1x project manager/ranger @ 3 days / wk and 1 x project /admin support/ helpdesk @ 2 days / wk.

He asked if this is the way we want the project taken forward (it is designed to work within current financial constraints, make better use of resources and take in those issues that the project has learned it needs to cover more thoroughly)? The CMG had considered and agreed this was right way to go, bearing in mind key areas we need to focus upon in the future, so does the Board wish to take on these proposals? BL said it seems eminently sensible and asked about funding.

Funding:

PR said it assumes the project continues and funding too. He has had to make assumptions, but there is no guarantee of course. BL asked if there will be overlap between the PM and admin/support officer under the proposed new way of working. PR agreed there should be one day common to both, though this need not be at same venue. CY asked if the office accommodation was available and MM said ESFJC could accommodate both posts as now and it reinforced their PIK.

Proposal agreed:

There being no more comments, MM summarised the that proposal was agreed and that this reinforces work PR has done and moved on to look at the job descriptions (JD).

Job descriptions:

CY commented it was long overdue to breakdown in this way; it was a more effective model and the JDs look good. RW echoed this and was inclined to adopt it in principle, adding that the point is what actions need to be taken now to formalise. PR said to remember his contract expires with current MOA too. PR said he may well be interested in future project management post, but inevitably there were no guarantees at this stage, either from the Board's point of view or his.

MM added, we could move on if there were no real issues. PR mentioned points PE had asked him to raise in his absence having clarified other points for him earlier, i.e. 1. Overall Objective to include for promoting the site with appropriate liaison and publicity, also 4. Dedicated Resource Commitment to state the current financial restraints and Liaison Brief to state who the Relevant Authorities are.

PE had also suggested consideration be given to amalgamating the Wash Estuary Management Plan (WEMP) and EMS Scheme to enable common services and a common location.

BL agreed we should look at amalgamating and the benefits that can be obtained. MM suggested the meeting proceeded with the way this project is set up first and then look at other possibilities from there.

3rd MOA:

PR therefore took the meeting through the proposed 3rd MOA he had drafted, referring to changes which were not many to make, other than for finance. There were no further comments.

PR then read a letter he had received from SHDC, noting it would affect the timescale for agreement on MOA. SHDC had requested that the possibilities of amalgamating the EMS and WESG projects be considered before committing to a future MOA.

DH agreed that the potential for amalgamating needs looking at before EA commit. BL agreed and has been thinking of this need. JJ asked what the situation was with the WESG and JW said it will be discussed later this month when SHDC's comments will be tabled; it's up to the meeting then to decide what to do.

JW wondered if an analysis of attendance at the EMS group could be made to see what overlap of attendance there is for officers and members; we could then reduce the FMB/G meetings to three and save some resources for more admin work.

BL asked if Tammy and PR had discussed formally. PR responded not formally, but informally.

Mention was made by someone that the Brecks project had been merged with a private sector tourism group.

PR extolled the virtues of both the WESG and EMS projects, suggesting he felt there might be opportunities in the future, but not necessarily yet, citing the Marine Bill for example. He strongly defended the two projects merits.

RW made the point that this discussion was borne of funding pressures, so not to unpick all the arrangements, just funding. RW also pointed out the fact that amalgamation may leave North Norfolk out; this is an important element to consider. He was not against examining the principle, but urged caution.

CY agreed. There could be difficulties with NNDC on funding if linking with the WESG; it needs to be progressed carefully. BL agreed, but we should look at both amalgamating and benefits to be had and the disadvantages too. There could be potential for more staffing, and more results, with both projects benefiting from combined resources. TW added it did seem admin savings were possible.

MM suggested the meeting should get comments back to PR for a future discussion on the subject.

RK said the Core Management Group (CMG) should give thought to the Marine Bill implications which could change everything. He added the separate arrangements seem very efficient presently thanks to ESFJC's lead role in the EMS. RK felt the projects were extremely complementary and not overlapping and urged exercising caution when considering changes.

RW added funding savings can also be counter-productive and the Marine Bill could be over riding in future. We may have to run parallel arrangements in the meantime and have a serious think later. MM pointed out that Marine Bill development may actually help this process and allow positive thinking.

JJ enquired if the EA will continue to give £5k per annum. PR said his proposals are based on the assumption the funding would continue at present level, but there were no guarantees; the MOA discussion should flush this out. DH said the EA had not made a decision yet and emphasised he could give no guarantees at this stage.

PR reminded the meeting funding justification was based on the Relevant Authorities' statutory obligations before; these remain a salient factor.

AA said BBC will have a look at the project and think of SHDCs proposals; they will need to consider amalgamation savings.

Action – MM asked the meeting to consider the potential for amalgamation and get comments back to PR, and we will consider this as requested by SHDC at the October FMG.

The meeting agreed.

4. Plans and Projects Update:

4.1 Fisheries:

Cockles - MM said hand working had had a very good year, but mixed yield classes in cockles this year had caused problems with dredging. The Industry was considering the way forward

Mussel fishery – There had been a lot of relaying activity from stock outside the site, which will take pressure off regulated beds.

Razor fishery - has been approved, but not targeted for fishing yet .

CD said this was an experimental fishery, but had not been taken up yet because of the success of other fisheries.

DB added Risk Assessments should be ready in next couple of weeks for MoD areas and sent to ESFJC. There are still issues of land ownership, esp. at Holbeach.

CD will be setting out proposals for a timetable for completing the Shellfish Management Policy with ESFJC and MM added ESFJC are keen to sign this and are discussing it closely with NE.

4.2 Boal Quay and Fisherfleet proposals:

PR apologised for leaving GC's report behind; he will circulate it after meeting. BL said he had also been unable to contact the right person. RW said Phase 1 Fisherfleet was likely to go ahead. Phase, 2 not. The Boal was now into the planning stage and both are interlinked and progressing.

4.3 Lincs Offshore Windfarms Cable Route:

CD confirmed Centrica has attempted to address NE's concerns, especially on other options to using the Wash. Further information had been requested by NE. Some of the types of technology available to reduce impacts are not applicable to the Wash. The proposal still needs an Appropriate Assessment; its an ongoing issues.

TW asked how much pressure NE was putting on Centrica to use Skegness. RK said NE can only advise on the effect on interest features, but they have pointed out the original assessment was lacking. NE can only relate to impacts on features and these depend on techniques.

TW said, if we say no to Wash, they will have to go elsewhere.

RK added that Centrica have issues with the time expectation from Government.

MM added that too much commitment appears to have been made. There is however a considerable amount of work gone into it and it is still not agreed. TW added , with 30 cables proposed, they have to affect the Wash.

RK added that laying them 1 metre deep does not sound adequate.

MM suggested we wait till the next pivotal point.

TW asked if we had objected; WESG has. MM said we are not that kind of body. TW responded saying our function is to protect the Wash, so we have to be against it.

MM said we should ensure that the appropriate representatives are addressing it, which is what we are doing and as NE are too. RW said it is important to see NE's letters which set it out. PR has circulated these previously.

4.4 Apache Attack Helicopter and the Wash Ranges:

RK said NE and MoD are engaged in correspondence on this subject; there seems to be a difference of opinion on approach. It needs a meeting to thrash through it. NE is pushing for this.

DB added this was fair comment. Advice from the MoD Environmental Support Team (EST) is that they are not in contravention to Habitats Regulations.

DB said he had advised at a previous meeting would study impact on the SPA features. The specification will go to their policy people and proposals will be put to NE.

They will be looking at baseline features with a desktop and field study. They will address their EMS obligations as their responsibilities are taken very seriously.

MM said this is important for other activities and other hard lines that are and could be taken; we accept the MoD's serious approach to the EMS.

Col SL said a variety of different aircraft use the Wash Ranges and the MoD do not think they have done anything wrong; they are providing training facilities. There is 35% useage now and it is likely to increase when troops come back from the East. Col. SL accepted they may have been guilty of a lack of consultation. There are a lot of planes from Marham, Cottesmore and some from Wattisham, in

addition to which the Americans come from anywhere and they are restricted where they can go now too.

RW asked what the point of the difference in the aircraft was. DB said when they were told it was coming, they were told it was the same as the Lynx and Gazelle. EST thought there was no need for consultation and acquire assent or consent. NE disagreed and were entitled make that decision. TW asked how high AH will it be working. DB said similar to the Gazelle.

RK added that this goes back to the Wildlife and Countryside approvals, compared with the Habs Regs. He said he has not seen the assessment for the Gazelle or Lynx. NE would see this proposal to use AH on the ranges as a Plan or Project under the Habitats Regulations 94 and, in terms of the process to be followed, it does not matter whether they affect or not; an Appropriate Assessment has to be done.

Col. SL said the matter has been escalated above their level now.

TT commented that he was sure of the difference, but these lads have to be trained and MoD have been very helpful in other ways. MM accepted this, but it is fundamental that there is an appropriate process to follow. We do appreciate what MOD does, but are keen these processes are followed. PR pointed out that in their reviewed Annexes MoD has stated AH was not to be introduced to the Wash and reiterated that the statutory process is important; it is an expectation of all relevant authorities. MM thanked Col Lloyd and emphasised the sensitivity here and that technically it was best dealt with outside. It is the role of this group, however, to facilitate this.

Action – To monitor developments on this issue between NE and MoD DE and update at future meetings.

5. AOB:

5.1 Groundwork Trust and Volunteer Wardening proposal:

PR confirmed he had put the proposal to The Groundwork Trust, for consideration of a combined HLF bid, following Sarah Williams' presentation at the April FMG. He had heard nothing since and was meeting with JJ and TV after this meeting to consider next steps and suitable alternatives.

5.2 Workshop Results “Assessing Management Effectiveness” using the OSPAR scorecard:

PR reminded the meeting of the workshop held at the end of the last FMG in April and went through the score card results. Those attending had felt it an interesting and interactive exercise and we had achieved a highly creditable 61.75%, an average of the score for design, adequacy, and delivery. He said we could have expected a higher score if our scheme included a socio-economic focus and was not subject to a short term funding pattern. These will be considered when revising the project, the current proposals for which are already likely to influence a future score. (After note PR - in advance of the site condition assessment we were also very cautious when marking on interest feature condition).

In the short discussion that followed RW pointed out it was important to have self-critical assessments. This was being done in a non-self congratulatory manner and we could learn from these results.

5.3 Litter Clean in the Wash NNR and EMS:

RK said that in the past Simon Cooter (NE) at the Wash NNR and local wildfowling have organised an annual litter pick up in liaison with the District Councils. Lately there have been difficulties with this and RK wondered if we wanted to consider the matter further?

It was agreed there was a need to gather facts and figures. It was noted there were some litter issues relating to old tips that are EA's responsibility. DH added there are differences between fly tipping and litter though. CD added that MCS sets up litter cleans, but they tend to be along shoreline.

Action – Project manager to research the subject of litter, clean-ups and disposal as part of review project process next year.

5.4 Marinas Review Sub Group:

RK said there are various marinas around the site now and more proposed and there might be impact on the EMS. He suggested a technical group to look at this. There is potentially a great increase in activity which makes it worthy of considering impact, possibly to linking in with WESG. MM asked if this would fit with the CMG. RK answered possibly but felt it better to have specialist group. RW

suggested the local authorities might be best as they have the info. It was agreed this was a good place to start and PR should convene a meeting of relevant personnel. The issues are liaison as well as what and how many. Could fit in with future direction of the project.

MM pointed out there is a link with a formal process i.e. Plans and Projects and Appropriate Assessments (AA). RK felt there might be a flaw in the system, as no cumulative assessment was being made though AAs are.

MM asked what is best to do? Expertise exists within Local Authorities and Ports.

Action – PR to raise with DCs and establish if they want to engage in a Marinas' Review meeting to explore issues of aggregation and impact.

5.5 Natural England's Access Strategy:

RK advised that the Access Strategy is Defra's not NE. NE has submitted report and Defra has put a consultation out. RW pointed out it is important, as the strategic issue is to establish a coastal footprint and it is important that people connect with this.

5.6 Review of newly elected and non re-elected members:

PR advised he had been brought up to speed with some elected member changes following recent local elections and, referred to them, asked if others knew of any changes he was not aware of. No more information was available from the meeting. TT suggested write to all who have "retired".

Action – PR to draft letters for MM to send to retiring elected members.

Other:

Wash Week and Vancouver Week:

JW gave the dates for Wash Week, encouraging people to look at the programme and attend events; it was a good week of events. PR said the programme contained a talk by ESFJC's on sustainable fisheries, that he hoped as many as possible would support; there was a good story to tell.

MM commented this is a good week for publicity and also referred to the similar good work done in Vancouver Week, in King's Lynn, by ESFJC's protection vessel crew inviting people onto P111 to hear what they do and by the EMS project manager promoting the project at Green Quay separately during that week .

Good Practice Guide VII:

PR advised the meeting that a VII of the Good Practice Guide was now on the project website and he would be grateful for comments. It was intended to consider updating it further in the next phase of the project, then producing a hardcopy too.

SMP Process:

RK said SMP process is proceeding and at some point in future it would be a good idea to bring details to this meeting. PR said he was on the Client Steering Group (CSG) and is confident with SMP plan, that it will be consulted at an appropriate time. There is already an Elected Members Forum (EMF) set up. RK also advised that the Regional Spatial Strategy for the E. Midlands had its EIP on the 13th July.

6. Dates of Next Meetings:

PR said the main meetings were set, but a CMG might be likely before 17th October FMG. He will circulate to agree as necessary. The Annual Full Management Board was set for the 5th December. Both meetings are at the same time and venue.

7. Summary and Conclusion:

MM thanked everyone for their attendance, saying we had covered some important issues and made some good progress.