

RIVER DEBEN ASSOCIATION

Committee Meeting 17 March 2021 at 6.30pm

1. **Present and apologies:** Sarah Zins, Jane Haviland, Moray MacPhail, Sue Orme, Kathryn Cooper, Liz Hattan, Caroline Matthews.

In attendance: Julia Jones, Martin Waller.
There were no apologies.

2. **Martin Waller:** SZ welcomed MW who was invited with a view to his joining the RDA Committee as Treasurer after the AGM.

3. **Declarations of Interest:** SZ reminded the committee to make declarations of interest if relevant.

4. **Minutes of meeting of 25 February:** There were no amendments. SZ would circulate a consolidated version of our January meetings for final approval before they were added to the website.

5. **Matters Arising:** None.

6. **Feedback from Suffolk Coast Forum:** JH had attended an interesting meeting last week. The group includes local government, river organisations and developers. It discusses ongoing projects on the East Coast which affect the estuaries; representatives from the RDA Committee attend as observers. Energy projects included Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station (SWC), East Anglia One and East Anglia Two (Offshore Wind Farms). These projects have submitted their respective applications for a Development Consent Order and are all entering the Examination Stage. There was substantial discussion about the coastal processes and defence proposals from SWC and the requirement for more detail to be provided on related issues and extent of areas affected.

Robin Whittle discussed river walls; design and finance need to be aligned. Shoreline management plans are being updated. Other members of this Committee could usefully attend future SCF meetings. The SCF Conference will be on 17 October this year (via Zoom due to COVID-19) and an RDA presence would be important.

(Action: CM to circulate SCF agenda)

7. **Revision of DEP Plan and Report on FC1:** The DEP plan is being re-drafted and JH is reviewing the scoping document. We unfortunately missed a February meeting due to changes in the Committee structure. Flood Cell 1

concerns potential Deben flooding between Bawdsey and Ramsholt. Discussions continue with regard to the solution to be adopted.

8. Conservation Sub-Committee - Nature and Water Quality: LH, SZ, JH and Robin Whittle held the inaugural meeting on 9 March. Terms of reference were agreed, focusing on establishing strong links with organisations such as Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Suffolk and Essex Rivers Trust, Natural England, RSPB, AONB and National Trust. It was agreed that it is important to gain opinions from the RDA membership; the AGM would be a good forum for this, including potential volunteers. JH and RW plan a saltmarsh survey in April. Concerns have arisen about increased activity on the river impacting nesting birds. Balancing recreation and conservation is key and information dissemination is critical. SZ and JH have consulted RSPB, NE and AONB for their input. We have offered assistance with fish surveys. Water quality is also under discussion and SZ/JH will contact Anglian Water. The Sub-Committee will meet every two months.

(Action: let SZ have ideas for places for notices and contact details for kayak clubs.)

9. Planning Applications: SO reported back about Dairy Cottage (Application 21/008) which had been approved. The decking will remain but the summerhouse must be taken down within 3 months.

10. Accounts: KC had circulated a Treasurer's report. The accounts are break even. April will see more activity with subscriptions coming in. SZ proposed, and CM seconded, the approval of the budget. JH thanked KC for her work as Treasurer.

11. Membership: MM reported that 130 people had now signed up for Direct Debit using the GoCardless system.. There will be more to report next month.

12. AGM: Mary Anne Bartlett of Art Safari and local artist Claudia Myatt will be our speakers (Sketching the Deben) at the AGM on 28 April. The Committee discussed the questions we could pose to the membership. Possibilities include the discount scheme, volunteering, social events and priorities.

13. Website/ Social Media/ Publicity: Our Facebook page is going well. MW and others encouraged the idea of a Twitter account. We agreed to insert a photo of the Deben into future emails to members.

(Action: JH and MW will research the Twitter idea.)

14. Spring Edition of The Deben: JJ reported that it was now with Betaprint and contained some excellent articles. We've ordered 850 copies and will use the excess as a marketing tool. It will be distributed to outlets for

sale at the reduced price of £2 (split 50/50 between the outlet and RDA). Woodbridge Museum had agreed to stock it. Committee members agreed to assist with the arrangements for ensuring a timely issue of the magazine.

(Action: Members to alert SZ to possible outlets).

15. Future Sub-Committees: SZ had circulated a proposed way forward. The Committee agreed to disband the Rivers For Life and Planning sub-committees. Planning would meet on an ad hoc basis as required. Remaining sub-committees, including Constitution and Flood Risk, would convene in the summer or as required. A Marketing and PR sub-committee was proposed and approved with MM agreeing to chair. Widening the membership and the production of publicity material would be priorities.

(Action: MM will chair with help from JH, JJ, KC and MW. ML was volunteered in his absence.

16. Any Other Business: MM and JvW have copies of a previous RDA leaflet which is still valid (apart from a telephone number). We could adapt the leaflet and distribute around multiple outlets.

MW asked about the ferry idea which poses difficulty on the Woodbridge side; next steps now rest with the Town Council.

Festivals: The Woodbridge Regatta has been cancelled. Maritime Woodbridge has been postponed to 2022. There may be a smaller event in September at which the RDA could have a presence.

MM wondered about content for a membership email in April. The osprey reintroduction scheme was one possibility, as was safety on the river for the variety of users.

JH mentioned the Photographic Competition starting at Easter, 4 April 2021. It was important to have contact details for the entrants.

JJ thought we should support the Spirit of Place Festival which will take place at the Longshed over the summer.

SZ mentioned that we were continuing the search for committee members willing to become Chair at some future point. Interest from our membership would be useful to explore as future committee members. The present Co-chairing is going well.

(MW left the meeting).

CM proposed MW as Treasurer to replace KC. SZ seconded and he was elected unanimously.

SZ expressed the Committee's gratitude to KC for her work and for agreeing to become the Association's examiner of accounts. There was a vote of thanks to KC.