

THE DUDDON ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Agreed at the November 2012 AGM

THE PURPOSE OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The Duddon Estuary Partnership as a whole, and each of its constituent elements described here, is solely an advisory and consultative organisation. It has no executive authority or powers.

The purpose of the Partnership is to promote the sustainable use of the Duddon Estuary. This means balancing the demands on its natural resources with the economic, cultural and social needs of the area and seeking to resolve conflicts of use, having regard to the needs of present and future generations through:

- developing a partnership which involves as many people and interests as possible to develop a shared vision and objectives for the future of the estuary;
- developing and promoting guidance on the management principles necessary to help achieve these;
- helping people work more closely together;
- encouraging statutory organisations and others to undertake their duties and responsibilities more effectively;
- responding to draft legislation and other proposals which may concern the Duddon Estuary.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

The Duddon Estuary Consultative Committee (DECC)

The management of the Partnership will be led by a Consultative Committee (hence forwarded referred to as the 'Committee') made up of representatives of organisations having a significant and legitimate interest in the Duddon Estuary. This includes local authorities, statutory undertakers, regulatory authorities, statutory advisory bodies, voluntary bodies, sporting and recreational organisations, commercial organisations, land owners and managing interests, local employers, and other bodies which the Committee may co-opt from time to time.

The Committee will meet three times a year, varying between a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. One meeting will be an Annual General Meeting when the Annual Report will be received. A chairman and vice-chairman are elected (from the individuals' eligible to stand) for two years and are eligible for re-election to the same post for a further two years, with a maximum continuous period of four years. A retiring vice-chairman will not serve in that capacity and a retiring chairman in either capacity for at least two years.

Procedure for the business of the Committee will generally reflect that applying in local authority committees. Ultimate discretion on the conduct of business will rest with the Chairman. The Committee will not normally vote on items of business, rather a consensus approach is commended. Where the Chairman judges voting necessary or appropriate it will be restricted to one vote per organisation.

A minimum attendance of eight member organisations is required for Committee decisions to be acted upon. Meetings that do not achieve this minimum attendance may however make recommendations to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee can

- propose the establishment of Action Groups;
- review and make proposals for alterations to the Partnership Strategy;
- annually prepare a Work Programme, Budget and Annual Report and Financial Statement.

Duddon Estuary Action Groups

Action Groups to deal with single issues or tasks may be established by the Committee. They will be temporary and on completion of the allotted task will be dissolved. Membership of Action Groups will be by invitation, aiming to include all key organisations relevant to the specific case, and will usually include at least one member of the Committee. An Action Group may co-opt additional members and invite outside representatives to attend in a consultative capacity.

The Committee may brief Action Groups to:

- prepare responses to consultation received by the Partnership;
- implement agreed actions;
- make recommendations directly to the Committee

In liaison with the Chairman, Action Groups may make direct responses to consultations or, exceptionally make urgent decisions on behalf of the Partnership. Action Groups are expected to report to the Committee on progress with the set task.

Secretary

- administers the work and meetings of the Committee by liaison with the Chairman;
- may, with the consent of the parent organisation, vote on behalf of that organisation if no other representatives are present;
- undertakes appropriate liaison or other work delegated by the Committee;
- will normally be the first point of contact for member organisations and others.
- In the event of a Secretary not being appointed, relevant duties will be carried out by the Chairman or a member of DECC on a temporary basis until such appointment is made.

RESOURCES

Partnership Resources

Resourcing the Partnership will be undertaken by willing member organisations. Costs will be met from in-house resources and/or funds contributed by members for specified tasks. Where it is necessary to handle money centrally, this will be undertaken by a willing member organisation specified for that project, to whom other contributing members will make direct payments by agreement. Currently Partnership resources are held centrally by Cumbria County Council and collected and administered by the Secretary. These resources will cover such things as:

- Typing, office and admin support;
- Consultancy fees;
- Design and printing costs;
- Campaign costs;
- Other – as may be agreed.

External Resources

The DECC may seek resources from 'external' bodies, such as grant aid schemes, or European Funding, to contribute to either core or project needs. Sponsorship funding may be sought but only with the express consent of the Committee.

LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY

The Partnership is organised in such a way as not to incur any financial or legal liability on its own behalf.

Actions undertaken in fulfilment of the 'Annual Programme' will be the responsibility of the individual member organisation carrying out the task. They will be acting within the terms of reference of their employing authorities or bodies, and are therefore expected to be covered by such authority's or body's existing insurance.

Financial contributions made to 'lead' organiser in support of a given task will not imply any liability on the part of the contributor.

Staff or others working on core tasks or projects for the Partnership will remain the responsibility of their employing or appointing authority or organisation.