

Broadland Futures Initiative

Minutes of the meeting held on 04 December 2023

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Attendees

Marie-Pierre Tighe (Chair)- Broads Authority, Mareth Bassett- Environment Agency, Giles Bloomfield- IDB, Wendy Brooks- Norfolk County Council, Peter Doktor- Environment Agency, Victoria Egan- National Trust, Kellie Fisher- Environment Agency, Catherine Harris- Environment Agency, Fiona Hinds- Natural England, Andrea Kelly- Broads Authority, Ian Robinson- RSPB, Rob Wise- NFU, Kylie Moos - Broads Authority (minutes).

1. Apologies for absence and welcome

Marie-Pierre Tighe (MPT) welcomed Wendy Brooks (WB), Head of Environment at Norfolk County Council (NCC) and Kellie Fisher (KF), Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) Manager for East Anglia at the Environment Agency (EA) to the meeting. MPT also thanked Mark Johnson for all their work on Broadland Futures Initiative (BFI).

Apologies received from Charles Krolik-Root, Kevin Hart, Philip Pearson and Charlotte Rivett.

2. Update of technical work

Peter Doktor (PD) provided an update on the technical work and the recent flooding events in Broadland.

Broadland flooding

October rainfall was 150-200% of the average in Broadland with the Upper Thurne catchment being impacted the most. The significant rainfall coincided with several days of surge on top of a neap tide constricting rivers draining through Great Yarmouth. The prolonged and excessive rainfall combined with high water levels is a possible indication of what the future with climate change could be like. The flooding event will inform the hydrological model development and help the BFI understand the key factors and how flooding might be managed in the future.

PD and Catherine Harris (CH) attended the Upper Thurne Working Group (UTWG) meeting last week where flooding was discussed in detail and operational questions were fed back to the EA incident team.

The aerial photograph used in the presentation shows the current flooding at Heigham Holmes and the inaccessible land and storage units. Victoria Egan (VE) added, the site is an example of how sites like this can alleviate the pressures on the rivers, but access needs to remain in place so that site management works can continue to take place. PD agreed that this provides an insight as to the practical implications of climate change in the future.

The local press recently published an article asking if the new third crossing at Great Yarmouth has contributed to the recent floodings. PD noted, when the Development Consent Order was taking place, NCC carried out a flood risk assessment and modelling which the EA reviewed. The flood risk assessment was extended as far back as the Bure loop. The width of the new crossing is approximately the same size as the Haven Bridge in Great Yarmouth. Tide gauges are in place downstream and upstream of the new crossing and visual comparison suggests there has been no change to the pattern of water levels. Both the EA and the Broads Authority (BA) have been

receiving a lot of media enquiries regarding the flooding from the recent article. The EA have prepared and are sharing a briefing note on the flooding situation in the Upper Thurne.

Several of the attendees at the UTWG referred to a particular paragraph in the Development Consent Order. Rob Wise (RW) who also attended the meeting asked that the response from the EA is more specific to satisfy the range of people that have views on the subject. RW recommended that both intermediate and long term actions are included when reporting on the event and an update should be provided to the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) at the next meeting in January 2024. Mareth Bassett (MB) confirmed that there will be further communication from the EA once the event has taken place.

The event provides a tangible feel for the future challenges which the Broad is going to face and will focus the minds of the Elected Members. KF recommended that there is an agenda item at the next Elected Members Forum on the Broadland flooding events.

PD then updated on the different tasks under way under the different headings of the plan creation process.

Describe Values and Agree Objectives

SMART objectives (Product 22)

- To identify one or two SMART 'indicators' for each BFI objective for use in appraisal. Work on this is due to restart in January 2024.

Prioritisation of objectives (Product 23)

- Elected Members Forum (EMF) meeting on 9 October 2023 confirmed the prioritisation and weights shared at the last IPT meeting.
- Affordability removed from objectives, but still a consideration.
- Emphasis that all objectives are still used, and prioritisation does not override legal obligations.
- 5 December 2023 deadline for comments on the draft technical report.
- The BA member who sits on the Elected Members Forum (EMF) provided an update to the last BA meeting. The report can be found at the following link: https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0031/495634/Broadland-Futures-Initiative-BFI-Member-report.pdf

Identify Actions and Pathways

'Toolkit' of possible flood risk management actions (Product 21)

- Now incorporating different products to streamline the next phase of work: some elements of action combinations (Product 27) with the transition between actions (Product 28) and short-listing of actions (Product 24).
- Summarise learning from past studies and strategies.

- Develop scenarios/challenges that actions could address – IPT to review February 2024.
- Develop action combinations – IPT to review April/May 2024.
- Consolidate action combinations for modelling and detailed appraisal – IPT & EMF to review July/August 2024.

MPT asked how best to involve BA Members into the next phase of work. PD agreed to discuss this with MPT outside of the meeting.

Appraise Actions and Pathways

Reporting units (Product 20)

- Dividing the BFI area into 'reporting units' still on hold pending progress with the hydrological modelling.

Designated sites for nature conservation (Product 25a)

- To determine the approach to Habitats Regulations assessment and understand legal obligations arising.
- Meeting on 30 October (NGO's, BA, NFU) revealed acceptance of the need for adaptation due to climate change but no shared overarching vision.
- Further meeting with Natural England (NE) 18 December 2023.

NE are working through the SSSI reform process, and several assessments have already been carried out. Fiona Hinds (FH) agreed to investigate this further and email the IPT with any further information.

PD agreed to review and share the notes from the 30 October meeting with NE before meeting on 18 Dec.

Social value indicators (Product 25c)

- Jacobs developing an activity schedule for the development of social value and wellbeing indicators and collection of relevant data.

Salinity modelling (Product 25d)

- HR Wallingford are entering into contract with Jacobs to undertake the statistical modelling of salinity. All contractual concerns have now been resolved.

Heritage and landscape appraisal (Product 25e & 25f)

- Data on heritage and landscape character are still being collected.

Economic appraisal (Product 26)

- Sets out how different assets will be evaluated within the economic appraisal of actions.

As part of reviewing this work, PD asked if the IPT would like a session explaining the principles of the economic appraisal at the February IPT meeting. IPT members welcomed the idea of the

workshop. RW added, similarly as part of their involvement in Fens2100+ the partnership also had an opportunity to input on the cost benefit analysis.

Giles Bloomfield (GB) asked if the economic appraisal is based on Multi Coloured Manual, if so, the economic value of the Broads will be underestimated from the start as the manual is not suitable for a lowland rural setting. The manual does not consider the value of estates in Broadland because it only takes into account national impact. KF responded, the Multi Coloured Manual is being used as a starting point for the short term, but not long term. An adaptive pathway will continue to be used and requested that any partnership experience on this approach is fed back to the project team. The project team have also started to discuss the economic appraisal with Jacobs and where appropriate, can step away from the Multi Coloured Manual so long as there is a good evidence base to support this. CH added, when applying for national funding BFI will need to consider national importance.

RW asked if the agricultural valuation work that has already been carried out in the Fens has been taken into consideration. CH confirmed that the baseline has been incorporated into the initial work and the Fens teams reported that even though they have a lot of Grade 1 land, stepping outside of the Multi Coloured Manual did not bring a significant increase of additional benefits.

Economists and social scientists are also working on this at NE and are looking for evidence to inform the work. FH agreed to speak to colleagues at NE and provide any feedback to PD.

PD agreed to confirm the workshop with Jacobs.

Climate change scenarios (Product 29)

- Identifies the climate change scenarios (i.e., degree of change in fluvial flows and sea level) that will be used to test the actions.
- Dictates the number of model runs required.

WB asked what the relationship is between National flood risk assessment 2 (NaFRA 2) and the BFI modelling. PD responded, the Partnership and Strategic Overview teams (PSO) will be reviewing the outputs as part of NaFRA 2.

Coastal boundary conditions (Product 31)

- The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) policy for Eccles-Winterton coastal frontage is hold the line (HTL) till 2055 and continues conditional on sustainability thereafter.
- To be an adaptive plan BFI needs to consider a range of futures including what the situation would be if HTL was unsustainable.
- Seeking to engage with stakeholders to determine what the alternatives to HTL might broadly look like. At the UTWG meeting last week it was agreed to do this at their next meeting.

3. Update on communications and community engagement

MB provided an update on communications and community engagement since the last meeting.

- Meeting with Coastal Partnership East regarding the social value study in Great Yarmouth. There are lots of projects that are looking at the social value of flooding and coastal erosion.
- Sharing messages regarding prioritised objectives. This will be included in the RFCC paper and included in an article for the Harnser.
- Museum of the Broads are updating their climate change displays and have asked for updates from BFI.
- Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance (NSFA) received a presentation from BFI on 23 November 2023.

Supporting Actions planned in the next period

- The BFI progress newsletter is due to be completed in January 2024.
- Website update will be carried out.
- Targeted emails at interest groups e.g., Angling Trust, Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association.
- Updating Engagement Plan – timelines etc

4. Update on Elected Members Forum

MPT and PD agreed to meet before the end of the year to discuss the agenda for the next meeting on 15 January 2024, and to include an item on Broadland flooding events.

5. AOB

MPT reported that the Broads new digital boundary was published on 17 November by NE. BA members were informed about it on 14 November and there is useful background info in the report. [Digital-Boundary-Combined-Appendix.pdf \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](#)

This is the outcome of NE and BA officers working on a project to create a consistent digital boundary map of the BA Executive Area that can be used with confidence at large scales, and on interactive maps. The BA have added an interactive map on their website. [Who we are \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](#)

6. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Broadland Future Initiative is 11.30am-1.00pm 5 February 2024.

Summary of progress

Outstanding actions	Meeting date	Assigned to
PD and MPT to meet to discuss the agenda for the next EMF and add an item on Broadland flooding	04/12/2023	MPT/PD
Review and share the notes from the 30 October meeting with the IPT	04/12/2023	PD
Confirm the economic appraisal workshop with Jacobs	04/12/2023	PD
Share findings of NE economic analysis with PD	04/12/2023	FH