

Minutes

Title of meeting:	Dee Conservancy Consultative Committee
Location:	Aviation Park, Flint Road, Chester, CH4 0GZ
Date of meeting:	30/4/2024
Members present:	<p>Josef Hanik – Wirral Council Tom Woodall – Flintshire County Council Peter Willet - Cheshire West & Chester Council Kathleen Bealby – Natural England Jim O’Toole – Port of Mostyn Graham Harwood – Maritime Coastguard Agency Trevor Jones – Fisheries Representative Alisdair Smith (RWE Renewables UK) – Commercial representative David Parker (Dee Estuary Conservation Group) – Conservation representative Roy Sheriff (Inland Waterways Association) – Recreation representative Lyndsey Rawlinson (Natural Resources Wales) - Appointed representative – Environmental regulator Wales</p>
Attendees present:	<p>Gareth O’Shea (Duty Holder) - NRW Exec. Ops Director Chris Jones (Designated Person) - NRW Wellbeing Health & Safety Advisor Andrea Winterton - NRW Marine Manager Dawn Beech - NRW Dee Conservancy Advisor Graeme Proctor - Dee Conservancy Harbour Master Andrew Graves - NRW Legal Manager Dewi Jones - NRW Legal Advisor Tom McNamara - BDB Pitmans</p>
Apologies:	<p>Anthony Bestwick – Wirral Council Damian Hughes – Flintshire County Council Andrew Challinor - Cheshire West & Chester City Council Stuart Caruthers - Royal Yachting Association Ashley Rogers - Commercial representative Alisdair Smith (RWE Renewables UK) - Commercial representative Nigel Glasgow - Appointed representative – Environmental regulator England</p>

Title of meeting:	Dee Conservancy Consultative Committee
Secretariat:	Kath Roberts - NRW Environment Team Assistant

Item 1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Gareth O’Shea opened the first meeting of the Committee by welcoming everyone and explaining that he would chair the first meeting in lieu of a Chair being appointed formally.

Gareth added a note to mark this key moment in the long history of the Dee Conservancy, making this first meeting part of a momentous day for the area, of which we all have a part to play.

Item 2. Introduction of Committee role and objectives

Dawn Beech explained that new Dee Estuary Conservancy Harbour Revision (No. 2) Order 2023 (the Order) came into force on the 12th July 2023 and requires NRW, in its role as the Conservancy Authority(CA) for the Dee Estuary, to set up this Committee.

The primary objective of this Committee will be to function as a forum for the sharing of knowledge and information relevant to the people and groups we represent, in a productive and positive manner that supports effective and transparent management of safe navigation in the Dee Estuary.

It is important to note that once established this will be a stand-alone Committee, with a Chair that is independent to NRW, acting in an advisory, not a decision-making, role.

Item 3. Terms of Reference

Election of Chair- preferably a volunteer. NRW can appoint a chairperson from the membership if necessary.

Jim O’Toole commented that the chairperson would need a good understanding of maritime issues, with navigational/marine safety qualifications.

David Parker requested clarification of the role of the Chair, and members. Agreed that these will be included in the Terms of Reference.

Meeting frequency agreed – twice a year, booked 12-18 months in advance.

Meeting duration agreed – 2-3 hours.

Meeting location discussed – local to the Dee Estuary. Face to face preferred by the majority, though some members indicated a preference for on-line meetings. To be reviewed.

Quora agreed – Nine was considered appropriate on the basis that the Committee is to consist of up to sixteen members.

Standard agenda items – to be appended to the Terms of Reference.

Agenda to be circulated 1 month prior to meeting. Papers circulated 2 weeks prior to meeting.

Members required by the Order – correct representative attends the meetings, and a deputy is also appointed in case the main representative cannot attend.

Provision of secretary – NRW has secured resource to provide secretariat support.

ACTION 001 - Tom McNamara – Revise Terms of Reference to include outline of Committee roles.

Item 4. HRO workplan & Timeline

Dawn Beech highlighted work in hand to review relevant Dee Conservancy documentation to bring everything up to date with the schedules laid out by the new Order.

Also that the Order enables NRW to recover some of its costs in delivering CA duties through a new charging scheme, which is yet to be developed. This will be a complex process both internally and externally, and it will not be delivered immediately (*due to resource constraints this is unlikely to be delivered before 2025*).

NRW in its role as Competent Authority will consult with this Committee in the process of developing and implementing a new charging scheme.

The Order also states that NRW may choose to develop a management plan, which will set out longer term aspirations and frameworks for the delivery of safe navigation on the Dee.

During the coming months NRW contractors will work to remove some derelict boats from the Welsh side of the Dee Estuary as part of the Nature Network funded Marine Litter project.

NRW is also working with Wirral Council on derelict boat removal from Heswall.

Jim O'Toole highlighted a National derelict boats project.

Members requested a map which outline relevant areas and boundaries, with local contacts to assist members in their work with this committee.

ACTION 002 - Dawn Beech – to produce map (to include boundaries of ownership and remit), and contact list and share with members.

Item 5. Member comments

Jim O'Toole highlighted on-going work at the Port of Mostyn regarding the Port extension work, and associated dredging. Matter to be addressed outside the Committee meeting.

Trevor Jones raised the need to review byelaws associated with the Dee Estuary, to clarify what byelaws are in force, and those that aren't.

Tom Woodall commented there are Delyn Borough Council byelaws in place at Talacre Beach.

A question was raised regarding the Crown Estate's involvement in this Committee. Whilst the Crown Estate is not specifically listed in the Order as a member of the Committee, they could be approached for a view on matters for consideration by the Committee when necessary.

Agendas and minutes for these Committee meetings will be shared publicly on the NRW website. Agenda and minutes will be circulated to committee members to agree prior to being published on the NRW website.

It was agreed that elected members would be contacted by NRW to confirm that the Dee Conservancy Consultative Committee has met.

Dawn Beech to arrange for elected members to be contacted.

Item 6. Next Meeting(s)

Face to face meeting TBC

26th November 2024

27th May 2025

Item 7. Closing remarks

Gareth O'Shea closed by thanking members for their commitment to taking the work of this Committee forward.