

Report to Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline

Date: 13 May 2011

Report of the Chairman of the Southern Coastal Group

3.1 National network of strategic regional coastal monitoring programmes (2011-2017)

This report is to inform Elected Members on progress for the development of the Southeast Strategic Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme into the National Network of Regional Monitoring Programmes.

The existing DEFRA grant aid funded Southeast Strategic Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme has been in operation since the financial year 2002/03. Funding continues until March 2012.

Following technical approvals for a five year programme commencing in April 2012, the financial and administrative approvals process has now been completed. Approvals have been now been received for the scheme.

In order to realise further savings from the programme, a coordinated approach to procurement is being undertaken nationally for contracted programme elements. This programme element is being coordinated by Steve Cook from New Forest District Council. With a range of local government organisations involved in the procurement process, each with differing standing orders, the programme has been challenging to agree. The procurement process is now well advanced.

Following EU advertisements in November and prequalification questionnaires, technical and financial evaluations are now complete. Potential suppliers have been informed of results and we are currently dealing with queries, mainly related to financial approvals. Specifications have been circulated amongst the project teams and framework documents being prepared for each region. The southeast sector is well on schedule for commencement in 2012.

Although the approval has been provided for the full sum requested in the scheme application, the sanctioned list shown for the medium term plan does not identify this programme. It should be noted that for other regions the approved sums have been reduced in the sanctioned list by about 20%. Following discussions with the EA finance team it is clear that the approval remains for the full sum, although the sanctioned list provides some ambiguity which remains unexplained.

The project does provide some potential opportunities for further savings which have minimal effect on programme delivery. These include contingency costs, co-funding some activities jointly with Natural England, modification of certain specifications, residual life of hydrodynamic equipment and joint

working with the MCA to deliver bathymetric surveys. On the basis of the suggestions above there is current potential over the 5 year period to meet some saving aspirations, although it may be very difficult to achieve all of the savings without significant impact on programme delivery.

Recommendation: For information

3.2 Member and Officer Events

OLD PORTSMOUTH Field visit – 14th June 2011:

The forthcoming event on the 14th June is summarised as follows:

- Over 60 attendees have registered (including 27 Elected members and 9 planners)

The event will include

- Coffee /tea on arrival (07:30)
- Talks in the Spinnaker tower:
 - Andy Bradbury – Introduction
 - John Slater – Planning
 - Ruth Jolley – Habitats
- Breakfast at the Spinnaker tower
- Walk to Old Portsmouth:
 - Portsmouth, Havant and Gosport group tour of scheme
 - Museum curator talk
 - Peter Murphy – Heritage
 - Colas demountable boards demonstration

Workshop - Planning for the impacts of coastal change: SMPs, Planning and Coastal Change Management Areas – 15th September (provisional date)
National Oceanography Centre

Anticipated Attendees

- LA and EA Coastal Managers and Officers
- La and EA Planning and Policy Officers
- LA Elected Members with Coastal Wards
- RFCC Members

Aim

Erosion risk and flood risk areas determined through SMP and FCERMS and used as basis for defining coastal change management areas

Recommendation: For approval

To approve expenditure £800 for running costs associated with the proposed planning workshop.

3.3 Proposed budget Paper D

Summary

To receive the draft budget for the Southern Coastal Group for the and for the Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline for the year 2009/10.

The report (paper D) provides the proposed budget for the Southern Coastal Group and SCOPAC for the financial year 2009/10. The budget for the Southern Coastal Group has been approved and the budget for SCOPAC noted by the Southern Coastal Group.

RECOMMENDATIONS: For approval

3.4 SMP progress

Within the SCOPAC region there are 3 SMPs that have been completed. They have been revised following public consultation and have been adopted by their Local Authorities and EA Regional Flood Defence Committees.

The **North Solent SMP** has been adopted or endorsed by 10 Local Authorities and the EA Southern Regional Flood Defence Committee. It has now received a favourable Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) decision from Secretary of State.

Defra are satisfied that obligations under the Habitats Regs, have been met through a thorough evaluation and assessment of alternatives. Due to the potential risk to >51,000 residential and commercial properties, ports, industrial assets and infrastructure a strong case has been made to justify the potential damage on grounds of imperative reasons of overriding public interest. Defra are also satisfied that appropriate steps have been taken to secure suitable compensatory habitats within the Regional Habitat Creation Programme to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network is protected. Therefore, Defra has no objections to intentions to approve the plan.

The EA can now proceed with the final formal approval of the plan anticipated in May 2011.

The **Poole and Christchurch Bays SMP** has been adopted by 5 Local Authorities and both the EA Wessex and Southern Regional Flood Defence Committees. The seven Operating Authorities have already formally adopted or approved the recommendations to adopt the final plan.

The plan is still awaiting IROPI decisions. These are expected in April. EA final approval will then follow shortly after.

The **Isle of Wight SMP** has been adopted by 1 Local Authority and the EA Southern Regional Flood Defence Committee. It has now received a favourable Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) decision from Secretary of State.

The EA can now proceed with the final formal approval of the plan. The EA can now proceed with the final formal approval of the plan, anticipated in May 2011.

The **Beachy Head to Selsey Bill SMP** was formally approved Feb 2010 - it did not need IROPI. The Beachy Head to South Foreland SMP was formally approved Aug 2010

Nationally there are 18 SMPs for England, 2 cross-border SMPs and 2 Welsh SMPs. Only the North Solent SMP was produced wholly in-house by a LA, the others were contracted by LAs and/or EA to consultants. Only 10 of the 22 SMPs have either received final approval or have been recommended for final approval - this includes the North Solent and IOW SMPs. The remaining 8 English SMPs are either awaiting recommendation for final approval, seeking adoption by LAs or awaiting IROPI decisions subject to submission of further details, so are likely to be approved May to Oct 2011. The cross-border and Welsh SMPs approval likely between July and Dec 2011

When compared to the other delayed SMPs, and considering the complexity of landownership and environmental designations and habitat creation issues within the Solent, the level of detailed assessments provided to support the North Solent and IOW plans have enabled a relatively straightforward progression through the process and kept within the original programme timetable.

Apparently, one of the Scottish SMPs is now underway and using the North Solent SMP as its best practice template.

Recommendation: For information

3.5 DEFRA consultations (Paper E)

DEFRA has recently concluded a consultation on Funding for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management - it is on the following link:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/flood-coastal-erosion/index.htm>

It contains suggestions for significant changes in the FDGiA funding system from April 2012.

A detailed response has been prepared by the Chairman of the Southern Coastal Group (Paper E). The response has identified considerable concerns

particularly with relation to the payment for outcomes approach related to provision of protection against coastal erosion. The proposals will result in very significant changes if implemented.

Recommendation: For information

3.6 Upcoming events

Southern Coastal Group training workshop – Recent practice with Rock Groynes, National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, 5 January 2011

SCOPAC meeting Thursday 22 September AM

SCOPAC meeting Thursday 8 December AM

Report by Professor Andrew Bradbury, Chairman of Southern Coastal Group