

**Report to standing conference on problems associated with the coastline**

**Date: 3 December 2009**

**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 commenced and these have been ongoing within the EA administration for the past few months. Approvals are expected shortly and assurance has been received that the programme will be recommended for approval.

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. Due to the scale of the programme the frameworks must be advertised in the European journal. The advert was placed on 19 November.

The project team has been asked to demonstrate how savings of 15% might be realised from the scheme application. The programme was designed to cut the costs to a minimum and many activities have already been reduced or removed from the programme at the design stage. These savings are already built into the programme estimates, and include such activities as wider use of in-house survey teams for topographic surveys, national coordination of nearshore wave and tidal data analysis, data quality control, centralised data management and procurement method. As the project team was already aware of potential cuts prior to submission the programme was designed with this in mind. In this sense many of the savings are already built into the original application for funding.

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 the 15% 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 Funding for Assessment of Coastal Erosion and Landsliding for – Application of Guidance notes**

A recent project, promoted by the EA, has sought to clarify funding issues which have historically resulted in failure of a number of Southern Coastal Group / SCOPAC members to receive grant aid funding associated with cliff instability. The Chairman of the Southern Coastal Group has been a member of the project steering group. The project has now reached a stage where preliminary guidance notes have been issued and these provide a much more optimistic outlook on funding possibilities, as reported to the last meeting of SCOPAC.

The new preliminary guidance provides clarification of procedures required to assist with eligibility of grant aid and it would appear that many sites that have failed funding tests may be eligible for funding, when the new guidance is applied.

This approach has now been tested with successful funding for ground investigation works approved by New Forest District Council for the site at Barton-on-Sea.

**Recommendation: For information**

**3.3 Training events**

The next workshop in the series is planned for early January and is likely to cover design and management of rock groynes. This event will once again be hosted by the Channel Coastal Observatory and be held at the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton. Once again there will be no cost for the use of the venue.

**Recommendation: For information**

### **3.4 Annual report Paper D**

#### **Annual report for the Southern Coastal Group and for the Standing Conference On Problems Associated with the Coastline**

##### **Summary**

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

##### **Background**

The report (paper E) provides the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual report for the Southern Coastal Group, and covers the period for the financial year 2009/10.

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS: For approval**

### **3.5 SMP progress**

Within the SCOPAC region there are 3 SMPs that are nearing completion. They have been revised following public consultation and are at similar stages of being adopted by their Local Authorities and EA Regional Flood Defence Committees.

The **North Solent SMP** is being adopted or endorsed by 10 Local Authorities and the EA Southern Regional Flood Defence Committee. It is on target to be adopted/endorsed (subject to IROPI) by mid December as 9 out of the 11 Operating Authorities have already formally adopted or approved the recommendations to adopt the final plan. The remaining 2 are due to be presented to respective Cabinets later in November.

The **Poole and Christchurch Bays SMP** is being adopted by 5 Local Authorities and both the EA Wessex and Southern Regional Flood Defence Committees. Four out of the seven Operating Authorities have already formally adopted or approved the recommendations to adopt the final plan. The other 3 are due to be presented to Cabinet and Full Council by mid December

The **Isle of Wight SMP** is being adopted by 1 Local Authority and the EA Southern Regional Flood Defence Committee. The final SMP will be presented to the RFDC and the IOW Council in early December.

All SMPs have submitted their Appropriate Assessments and are awaiting Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) decision from Secretary of State – estimated to be received December and January 2011. Until these decisions are known the SMPs can only be adopted subject to obtaining IROPI.

County Councils and other non-operating authority organisations are not required to formally adopt the final plans. However, some of these organisations may be presenting the final plan to their Members for acceptance or approval.

### **Recommendation: For information**

#### **3.6 Website Paper E**

At the last Southern Coastal Group (SCG) meeting in October, the options paper which compared the cost of three organisations maintaining the SCG and SCOPAC websites (Paper E). The SCG agreed that the most efficient way of maintaining the websites was for the Chairperson of the Research sub-group to manage the website content and for Sarah Austin from Vivid Websites to maintain the website and develop any graphics. A meeting was held with Sarah Austin on the 24<sup>th</sup> November to discuss updating the two websites in terms of their graphics and content. The new Southern Coastal Group website is live but is still in the process of being updated (<http://www.southerncoastalgroup.org.uk/>). The new SCOPAC website will go live in the new year and will still be found at <http://www.scopac.org.uk/>

### **Recommendation: For information**

#### **3.7 DEFRA / EA consultations**

The Environment Agency has just started a consultation on the National Flood and Coastal Risk Management strategy it is available on the following link

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/ho/flood/fcerm/strategy>

Included within this is a related Defra 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.

Both documents will require significant discussion at officer level, but the recently published consultation documents are provided since they provide early warning of potentially significant changes.

### **Recommendation: For information**

#### **3.8 Upcoming events**

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

Suggested SCOPAC meeting Thursday 17 March 2011 AM – To be confirmed

Suggested SCOPAC meeting Thursday 22 September 2011 AM – To be confirmed

Suggested SCOPAC meeting Thursday 8 December 2011 AM – To be confirmed

Report by Professor Andrew Bradbury, Chairman of Southern Coastal Group