

Subject: COASTAL MANAGEMENT

Report to: EMT (29/9/16) Environment Committee (12/10/16)

Report by: Bill Parker, Head of Coastal Management Coastal Partnership East

#### **SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS**

Introduce the Environment Committee to the work of Coastal Partnership East, specifically informing them of progress of the Gorleston to Lowestoft Coastal Strategy and Great Yarmouth tidal defence.

To seek the support of the committee to undertake a coastal management review between Winterton and Great Yarmouth.

#### **1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

Coastal Partnership East was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and is a joint coastal management team between four local authorities: Great Yarmouth Borough, North Norfolk, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils. This team has been formed to; provide greater resilience for each authority, to share fragmented expertise and improve recruitment potential, utilise scale to leverage benefits, build on opportunities created by New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and to take advantage of opportunities beyond Norfolk and Suffolk. It is not; a budget saving measure, a reduction in our commitment to local communities and businesses.

This report and accompanying presentation (see appendix A) identifies how it is organised, its work to date and seeks the support of the committee to start new work going forward.

#### **2. Coastal Partnership East**

- a. Coastal Partnership East (CPE) was officially launched on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at the most easterly point of England at Lowestoft Ness. The launch was enthusiastically supported by Neil Hornby (Deputy Director Defra) and Mark Johnson (Coastal Manager Environment Agency) as a progressive and innovative approach. There are only three other similar coastal partnerships in the country but this is the first to work across two counties.
- b. The learning from these other partnerships has been brought into CPE. The team has been formed using a Local Government Act Section 113 agreement. It has a jointly funded manager will retain a team member (or potentially more in future) at GYBC. The team is managed by an Operational Officer Group (OOG) with senior management representation from each local authority (GYBC – Customer Services Director) and a Board that contains the CPE Head of Coastal Management, OOG and has Committee Chair / Portfolio

Holder representation from each local authority (GYBC – Environment Committee Chair). There are agreed terms of reference for both Board and OOG and the chair for 2016 / 17 is Cllr. Angie Fitch-Tillett (NNDC).

- c. An initial business plan with action plan for 2016/17 has been drafted and approved by the Board. It has been developed pulling together a number of key strands including: the local authority corporate plans, Shoreline Management Plans and Environment Agency requirements, coastal monitoring and risk management responses, local knowledge from the CPE team, responses to individual community needs and preparation for future flooding events (e.g. tidal surges). This is supported by the aims of: reducing bureaucracy, using technology to improve efficiency and decentralising and empowering communities.
- d. The Action Plan has five themes:
  - i. Knowing the coast – understanding how the coastal processes work, the condition of local authority assets and where and what scale the risks are. In addition this also incorporates the developing work on coastal adaptation.
  - ii. Engaging with others and improving resilience – This is the fulcrum of our work. Ensuring we engage with many partners as we can (professional, organisational and community based) to enable them to undertake the work they need to do but also that they can support CPE in the work that it needs to do. This includes supporting coastal businesses to be more resilient.
  - iii. Delivering for communities – This ranges from maintaining our current coast defence assets to investing in new and improved defences protecting communities, the visible work on the ground.
  - iv. Improving capability and capacity – As a small team we need to develop our existing staff, build our capacity both through recruitment but also by harnessing our partner's resources where possible.
  - v. Funding and Finance – Besides ensuring prudent, transparent and cost effective use of public money. Major projects investment in the next 5 years could be in excess of £66m. CPE invests time in developing new alternative funding sources to fill the gap in government funding for these schemes.
- e. There are 4 major packages of work along the CPE coastline, these include:
  - Sizewell 'C' potential nuclear power station, Lowestoft flood risk management strategy, the protection of Bacton and Walcott and Great Yarmouth tidal flood defence.

### 3. Priority work in Great Yarmouth Borough

#### a. Gorleston to Lowestoft Strategy.

Coastal strategies take a practical and detailed look at the ability to deliver the

aspirations of the Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs are the intent of management for every section of the English and Welsh coast). A strategy is being undertaken jointly by Waveney DC and Great Yarmouth BC covering from Gorleston to Pakefield (south of Lowestoft). The draft strategy has completed its public consultation stage and there are no key issues outstanding to be resolved. The next stage is for this to be submitted to the Large Project Review Group (LPRG) in the spring 2017. The LPRG is the scrutiny body of the Environment Agency that has to approve every strategy developed. We have been working with the chairman of the LPRG who is fully aware of the approach taken and we believe is comfortable with the outcomes. Once this is approved then projects can be developed to deliver works 'on the ground' which will initially be on the Hopton Corton border and into Corton in Waveney. In addition we will progress a proposed change in the Shoreline Management Plan policies for Hopton to reflect the change in management approach.

**b. Great Yarmouth tidal flood defences.**

Work is currently underway to address the structural issues to harbour walls and flood defences primarily caused by accelerated low water corrosion. This is a failure of sheet piling along the harbour wall but only at low tide level. An innovative new solution is being trialled (termed rejuvenation) by implementing a repair and the use of sacrificial anodes to the affected area rather than replacement of the entire pile. However this is challenging due to having to work at the low tide mark. If this trial is successful it will greatly reduce the overall cost of the works of future works. The estimated cost for the entire inner harbour area is £282m with replacement piles or potentially £85m through the rejuvenation approach. The next phase (Epoch 2) will cover 2.4km of wall and start in 2018. Whilst the work is being led by the Environment Agency, Coastal Partnership East is contributing by:

- a) providing support and expertise to the work overall.
- b) providing expertise on alternative funding sources working with the Great Yarmouth Tidal Defence Business Partnership.
- c) ensuring the interests of GYBC are reflected in the approach.

**c. Winterton to Yarmouth Coastal Management review.**

It is proposed to start a new work to undertake a review of coastal management from Winterton to Great Yarmouth. Currently in this section of coast there are a number of local approaches to how this coast is managed and a study would bring all of these elements together into a single co-ordinated and holistic document. The initial draft scope is being shared with the Environment Agency for their initial opinion. With their support the proposal is to then apply for a Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) grant to fund (partly or wholly) the study. The study proposal includes a full consultation with local communities and businesses and will take two to three years to complete. It is anticipated that once this study has been completed there will then be up to date practical plans in place supported by local communities and businesses to effectively

manage GYBC coastline. This will provide clarity on when and how GYBC through CPE will need to intervene and invest in the future.

#### 4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5. Coastal Partnership East – 25% contribution to fund manager post and agreed shared costs. This is estimated for 2016/17 at ~ £25k.  
Gorleston to Lowestoft – The Strategy is fully funded but future works will need to be funded separately. These have yet to be agreed or costed.  
Great Yarmouth harbour flood defence – Costs are currently being reviewed due to the new approach of rejuvenation being trialled. Funding for these works is challenging and it is anticipated that a significant shortfall that will have to be found locally.  
Winterton to Yarmouth Strategy – This has yet to be costed. The Gorleston to Lowestoft Strategy is budgeted at £300k and this was fully funded through the Environment Agency however with a revised funding structure there may be a need for some local funding contributions.

#### 6. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Within the GYBC Corporate Risk register there are 2 key risks that CPE can help mitigate as follows:

Business Continuity – Coastal Management

Coastal Partnership East – This provides a reduction in risk to business continuity (previously loss of key staff – red flag) as GYBC is now part of a wider team more resilient team with coastal management expertise.

43 – Flood and Coast Defence

Gorleston to Lowestoft Coastal Strategy – Identification of the management approach on flood defences. There are some residual detail issues to be resolved to avoid potential reputational damage.

Great Yarmouth tidal flood defence – Work is well underway on this long term project. The risk of flooding in Great Yarmouth will diminish as each epoch is completed. The provision of funding is still on ongoing risk but work is being progressed on this.

Winterton to Yarmouth Coastal Management review – The current piecemeal approach to this stretch of coastline and lack of a long term plan is in the short term is a reputational risk to GYBC and in the longer term some coastal communities are at risk.

#### 7. **CONCLUSIONS**

CPE provides resilience to GYBC for flood and coast defence. This will enable capacity that previously has been unavailable to GYBC to be utilised to address long term issues. Excellent partnership working has already been demonstrated and this should continue to mitigate the risks and issues faced by GYBC from flooding and coastal erosion.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. To support the progress so far and the future work of CPE
2. To continue to support the Gorleston to Lowestoft Strategy to its conclusion
3. To note the progress of tidal flood defence works
4. To support the development of the Winterton to Yarmouth Coastal Management review.

9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- a. Presentation introducing Coastal Partnership East.

*Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?*

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	<b>No</b>
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	<b>Yes</b>
Existing Council Policies:	<b>Yes</b>
Financial Implications:	Yes
Legal Implications (including human rights):	Yes
Risk Implications:	Yes
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	No
Crime & Disorder:	No
Every Child Matters:	No