

Agenda Item No: 9.9 **Report No:** 29/17

Report Title: Progress Report on the Coastal Defence Implementation Plan

Report To: Cabinet **Date:** 8 February 2017

Cabinet Member: Tony Nicholson

Ward(s) Affected: All

Report By: Ian Fitzpatrick, Director of Service Delivery

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Purpose of Report:

To update cabinet on the management of flood and cliff erosion risks along the coast between Cuckmere Haven in the east and Saltdean in the west.

Officers Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1** Notes the Council's responsibilities and duties under the Coast Protection Act 1949 and identifies and notes where there currently are defences and where there are not and who is responsible for those defences.
- 2** Agrees to a series of targeted consultations with key stakeholders and individuals explaining the findings of the Brighton to Newhaven Coastal Management Implementation Plan (BNCMIP) to be undertaken in February/March 2017.
- 3** Notes the existence of an internal working group to explore the implication of the BNCMIP.
- 4** Requests an update report on the implications of the BNCMIP within the next 6 months

Reasons for Recommendations

- 1** LDC and Brighton and Hove City Council employed consultants to develop a Coastal Implementation Plan to explore with key stakeholders. The Plans aim was to explore how the coast, both defended and undefended stretches, is likely to change over the next 100 years. The plan reports on

the implications and options and how councils, key stakeholders and communities may manage the risks posed as the shoreline changes due to the action of the sea.

Information

Background

- 2** LDC with other agencies manages the coast stretching from Saltdean in the west to Cuckmere in the east, some 14.5 km of shoreline. Over two hundred years many structures have been built to manage the risks posed by our ever changing shoreline. This report identifies those measures have been taken to protect the cliffs from erosion and land from flooding and how LDC has managed the cliffs and their defences in the last 10 years.
- 3** The Coastal Protection Act 1949 provides Lewes district Council with permissive powers to take steps to manage the risks posed by the erosion of cliffs. There are 9.7 km of cliffs where we might wish to use these powers to manage the shoreline. There are several stretches of coast where there are no houses or roads close to the cliff edge or where presently the houses and roads are some distance away from the cliff edge.
- 4** Newhaven Port and Properties are responsible for Newhaven Harbour and the mouth of the Ouse, which they maintain for navigation purposes.
- 5** The Environment Agency is responsible for managing the beaches at Seaford Bay, from the mouth of the Ouse east to Splash Point. These defences comprise of a shingle beach, which at Seaford is placed in front of a concrete sea wall. The Environment Agency undertakes annual beach recycling operations and so protects parts of Newhaven, Bishopstone and Seaford from flooding by the sea.
- 6** At Portobello Southern Water Services Ltd is responsible for sea defences that protect the Portobello works and long sea outfall.
- 7** The Channel Coast Observatory, part of a national network, undertakes long term strategic monitoring of the coast, providing data about wave heights, cliff erosion rates, aerial photographs and beach profiles; data essential in managing the coast.
- 8** The processes that determine how the coast erodes or where shingle and sediments accumulate is governed by tides, currents and storms that work along our coast over at a large-scale. In order to manage the risks associated with a changing coast, the UK coast has divided into distinct sections. For each section, a high level document for coastal flood and erosion risk management plan, has been developed, namely the Shoreline Management Plan. The management of the Sussex Coast between Selsey Bill and Beachy Head is guided by such a Plan. The SMP was last updated in 2005/6 and provides a framework for the management policies for the coastline into the 22nd Century. Under the Shoreline Management

Plan a series of more detailed plans and strategies are required, identifying in more detail the long term management objectives, environmental and technical issues, planning policies and economic viability of the options that could be adopted to manage specific shoreline frontages.

Current Protection

9 Currently we have cliff protection at the following locations:

- Coastguard Cottages where a private scheme was originally built in the 1950's
- Cliff protection at Splash Point Seaford possibly dating back to Victorian times and the 1950's
- Newhaven Western Arm built in 1881 protecting the Harbour and Newhaven Fort
- Peacehaven sea defences built in stages from 1976 to 1997
- Portobello Outfall owned and managed by Southern Water Services, originally Victorian rebuilt in 1976
- East Saltdean Sea defences built in 1996

Unprotected areas

10 There are several locations along where there are no defences to reduce the risk of cliff erosion, these are between:

- Coastguard Cottages at Cuckmere to Splash point at Seaford including Seaford Head
- Newhaven Western Arm to Peacehaven including Old Nore Point
- Peacehaven to Portbello at Telscombe
- Portobello to East Saltdean

11 In recent years Lewes District Council has delivered the following to seek to manage and assess the cliff erosion risks along our coastline:

- In 2009 Lewes District Council was awarded £700,000 of Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) monies to undertake major repair works to sea defences between Groynes 1 and 17 at Peacehaven. The works commenced in April 2011 and were completed in October that year;
- Commissioned a study examining the options to best manage Groynes 18 and 19 at Peacehaven, which have fallen into a poor state of repair, but because they do not protect any properties are unlikely to be eligible for FDGiA;
- Repairs to Peacehaven and East Saltdean defences and Splash Point, following the storms of 2013/14;
- Implemented a programme of cliff monitoring;
- Obtained funding to develop the Brighton Marina to Newhaven Coastal Management Implementation Plan; and
- Ongoing surveys of the cliff top fences, access tracks, signs and life buoys.

Brighton to Newhaven Coastal Management Implementation Plan (BNCMIP)

- 12** The BNCMIP was jointly commissioned by Brighton and Hove City Council and Lewes District Council. The Plan provides a more detailed understanding of how this stretch of coastline is likely to change due to the action of the sea over next 100 years. The plan identifies properties, roads, and infrastructure along the coast and seeks to estimate when these items may be at risk if no further steps are taken to manage the coast. The Plan examined how the coast is likely to develop utilising current understanding of how the sea behaves by working with leading experts on chalk cliffs and analysing how a changing climate may impact on the coast in the future.
- 13** The BNCMIP explores the potential options for the management of the risks posed along the shoreline by assessing discreet sections of the coast. The BNCMIP identified the cost for each option taking full account of environmental considerations, comparing these with the value of the properties and infrastructure and land protected by the works against the potential costs. The BNCMIP also examined how the costs might be funded in the context of the Environment Agency's funding criteria. The Environment Agency is the funding body for all capital coast protection and flood defences in England.
- 14** The BNCMIP identifies the relevant licenses and permission that would be required given that much of our shoreline and coast is designated as a National Park, Site of Scientific Special Interest and/or a Marine Conservation Zone.

Proposed Next Steps

- 15** In February and March 2017 we are aiming to undertake a number of targeted consultations exercises, explaining to invited individuals the findings of the BNCMIP and seeking their opinions and views on the Plan and how it could be implemented and whether or not they wish to be involved.
- 16** These events will be undertaken in Newhaven, Peacehaven and Telscombe. Local Councillors will be invited to attend. The most likely format will be drop in sessions, where officers will be on hand to explain the project, the options identified and to listen to stakeholder's initial thoughts and opinions.
- 17** One of the aims of these events would be to identify key stakeholders who would be willing to give of their time and energy in a working group to assist in exploring how the BNCMIP can be implemented.
- 18** At the same time an internal working group will be convened to analyse the BNCMIP and explore the implications of the Plan with regard to how we manage the coast, the Local Plan and financial issues raised.

- 19** Meetings will be arranged with representatives of East Sussex County Council, Environment Agency, Natural England, and Southdown's National Park, Marine Management Organisation and Brighton and Hove City Council to discuss the Plan and implications in the short, medium and long term.

Financial Appraisal

- 20** There is no financial appraisal required at this stage.

Legal Implications

- 21** Not applicable at this stage.

Risk Management Implications

- 22** This reports sets out actions that will lead to the formulation of a long term plan to manage the coastline. This plan will be developed to identify risk and mitigation where applicable.

Equality Screening

- 23** Not applicable at this stage

Background Papers

- 24** None