

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Exmouth Beach Management Plan Steering Group held at online via zoom on 26 October 2021**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 2.03 pm and ended at 3.34 pm

#### **1 Welcome**

The Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment welcomed all attendees to the first meeting of the Group.

#### **2 Declarations of interest**

Cllr Pauline Stott of Exmouth Town Council; minutes 5 – 10; personal interest; family members involved with lifeboat station at Exmouth.

Cllr Paul Millar; minutes 5 – 10; personal interest; Appointed Director of Sideshore.

#### **3 Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment Introduction**

The Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment gave the Group some background to how the Sidmouth and East Beach BMP Advisory Group, under his chairing, had been challenging but had delivered progress on their scheme. He outlined the role of the Group to look at information presented to them and make recommendations to the Cabinet of East Devon District Council who had authority to approve a revised beach management plan. He reminded the Group of the limitation of funding in agreeing a scheme.

The Group had the benefit of professional officers, local experts in their field and the local knowledge of Ward Members. The goal of the Group was to look to find a solution within funding limits to stop the lowering beach levels which, if left to continue, would undermine the existing sea wall. Flood defence schemes funding was based on the flood risk to homes; whereas for the Exmouth beach area, the risk to assets on the beach did not necessarily equate to qualifying for significant funding.

#### **4 Reminder of what a Beach Management Plan is, and what it covers**

The Engineering Projects Manager reminded the Group of the existing Beach Management Plan in place completed in 2015. This plan was originally part of a larger plan that included Dawlish Warren, but had now been separated. A visual presentation of the change in beach profile between 2018 and 2020 was shown to the group to outline the shift in beach material. A refresh of the plan was now required to reflect the changes.

Regular monitoring was undertaken of the levels, with the last published report provided to the Engineering Projects Manager of October 2020. Group members reported that one recent surveying of the beach had been undertaken and that a more recent report may be available.

Max Underhill from the RNLI outlined the planned works by them in early November, explaining the works for extending the launch slipway, which will effectively close the

beach for the majority of the tide whilst underway. An image was shared with the Group of the current condition of the sea wall nearby, which showed considerable undercutting. This would be rectified as part of those works.

In response to a question on the Shoreline Management Plan, a link would be circulated to access the current plan: [SDADCAG SMP2 - SWRCMP \(coastalmonitoring.org\)](https://www.coastalmonitoring.org/SDADCAG/SMP2-SWRCMP)

## 5 **Nomination for Chair of the Exmouth Beach Management Plan Advisory Group**

Councillor Paul Millar was nominated by Councillor Eileen Wragg, seconded by Councillor Nick Hookway  
Councillor Fred Caygill was nominated by Councillor Pauline Stott, seconded by Councillor Maddy Chapman.

Councillor Millar received 6 votes in favour, with 2 votes against;  
Councillor Caygill received 4 votes in favour, with 6 votes against.

Councillor Millar was therefore elected Chair of the Steering Group.

## 6 **Scope and Aims of Project**

The Group reviewed the scope and aims of the project, including discussion on the inclusion of:

- Reference to climate and ecological emergency;
- Clarity on area covered by the BMP by means of a map;
- Protection of other assets along the seafront area, such as properties as well as the sea wall; examples of which being the lifeboat building and other properties;
- If the plan would include mitigation of flood damage;
- Urgency of works required;
- Maintain or increase the sand levels;
- Care of scope not to drift from main purpose;
- Keeping abreast of developing work at Dawlish Warren and how that may impact delivery of the plan.

Councillor Hookway proposed that the following wording (amended by Councillor Tim Dumper) be included in the scope:

- To view the project as urgent
- To tackle the project with regard to the climate and ecological emergency.

In conclusion, the Group agreed for further review to the scope and aims to be undertaken by officers, in light of the discussion at the meeting, and bring back and expanded draft scope for the Group to consider at its next meeting.

## 7 **Terms of Reference**

In reviewing the Terms of Reference, the group were asked to nominate two Exmouth Ward Councillors for voting positions on the Group.

Councillors Olly Davey and Elieen Wragg were elected as the voting members on the Steering Group.

The Group were in broad agreement that the draft terms of reference were acceptable and should be adopted, with the changes to membership as agreed following the election of voting members from the Exmouth Wards.

**Recommended** that the Terms of Reference for the Exmouth BMP Steering Group be approved by a Senior Officer.

## 8 **Project Management Board proposal**

The Engineer explained the concept of a Project Management Board, which would sit above the Steering Group and be responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery project, in line with the aims of the project;
- Manage the project risks;
- Makes decisions as permitted under delegated authority of the Strategic Lead Housing & Environment;
- Receiving advice from the Steering Group;
- Setting up sub-groups as required for discussion of technical matters.

The group concurred with the outline of the Project Management Board. This Board would be set up as required under the authority of the Strategic Lead Housing and Environment.

## 9 **Beach Management Plan progress update**

Continuing from questions by the Group under minute 4, the Engineering Projects Manager outlined the current works on the beach under the current BMP, including:

- Capital Bid to fund a consultant submitted
- EA's assistance being used in 'scoping' scope
- Intention to have draft consultant scope prepared for next BMP meeting
- EDDC accepted invitations to Dawlish Warren Monitoring Management Plan

The group noted the progress on current BMP works.

## 10 **Update on general beach constructions works**

The Engineering Projects Manager outlined other works not relating to the BMP, including:

- Littleham Brook outfall – a capital bid had been prepared for the works required, which involved the likely replacement of the exposed pipe. The works were planned to be undertaken and completed in the autumn of 2022 to avoid the peak season of the beach; in response to questions the type of pipe replacement was discussed and Members were assured that the pipe needed to run under the lifeboat ramp in order to connect to other systems, but without impacting on the delivery of the extended ramp;
- Foxhole steps had now been replaced with concrete steps and were now open for use;
- Groyne marker replacement at Orcombe point was pending.

The Group noted the update and responses to questions.

**Attendance List**

**Group members (voting):**

Cllr Paul Millar – Chair – EDDC  
Cllr Olly Davey – EDDC  
Cllr Eileen Wragg – EDDC  
Cllr Pauline Stott – Exmouth Town Council  
Cllr Tim Dumper – Exmouth Town Council  
Cllr Christine Channon – Devon County Council  
Harriet Googe – Environment Agency  
Max Underhill – RNLI

**Group members (advisory)**

Cllr Geoff Jung - EDDC  
Cllr Nick Hookway - EDDC  
Cllr Fred Caygill - EDDC  
Cllr Bruce De Saram - EDDC  
Cllr Maddy Chapman - EDDC

**Officers in attendance:**

Tom Buxton-Smith, Engineering Projects Manager  
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Giles Salter, Solicitor  
Peter Blyth, Beach Safety Officer

**Apologies:**

Cllr Tony Woodward – EDDC  
Nigel Snowshall – Exmouth Beach Rescue Club  
Martin Davies - Environment Agency  
Chetna Jones – Deputy Clerk Exmouth Town Council

Chair .....

Date: .....