

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Exmouth Beach Management Plan Steering Group held at online via zoom on 14 December 2022**

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

The meeting started at 4.25 pm and ended at 5.23 pm

#### **18 Welcome and introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The notes from the previous meeting were agreed.

#### **19 Reminder of aims and terms of reference**

The Engineering Projects Manager set out a brief reminder of the aims of the Plan and the terms of reference of the steering group as follows:

##### Scope of the Plan

Physical project extents to be defined by Smeaton Wall to the West, or Orcombe Point to the East (as per existing BMP);

Study extends to include physical project extent area as well as the coastline both east and west of the physical project area, and including the Exe Estuary (such as part of the Marine area);

The BMP is to manage the long term physical nature of the beach, not the management of the day to day running of the beach.

##### Aims

Treat the project as urgent;

Look at reducing sand loss on the beach, and increase sand level if possible;

Maintain beach to protect sea wall;

Maintain/improve amenity of beach;

Carry out all aims in an integrated and sustainable way, with regard to the climate and ecological emergency.

The area of the BMP was shown on a map to explain the extent visually.

#### **20 Overview of the Exe Estuary Management Partnership**

The Chair welcomed Stephanie Harper-Chung, Exe Estuary Officer, to the meeting. She outlined to the Group an overview of the work of the Exe Estuary Partnership.

The Exe Estuary Management Partnership (EEMP) coordinates management of the estuary, on behalf of local authorities, government agencies, and conservation, commercial and recreational interest groups. The EEMP also acts as a contact point for local communities of the estuary. The Partnership seeks to conserve and enhance the estuary's special nature and promote sustainable economic and social activity, by managing competing demands and addressing any conflicts that arise. Overall the Partnership is looking to keep a balance between human use and the protected nature of

the Exe. The work is guided by the Exe Estuary Management Plan, which currently runs to 2027.

Some highlights of the plan were outlined to the Group, such as:

- Biosecurity plan that covers existing data of non-native species in the Estuary;
- Education and interpretation events, such as clean up events, accessible route cards for visitors to the Estuary, and involvement with schools;
- Exe Wildlife Refuges;
- Sedimentation in the Estuary, leading to creation of “Marine Subgroup”, with a view to identify locations where work could be targeted to help address sedimentation build up.

Other work highlighted included their post scheme review of the Dawlish Warren beach management, in an advisory capacity.

The presentation made by the Exe Estuary Officer is available online.

In response to a question, any input on a planning application that relates to impact on the estuary will be fed into the County Council’s comments on the application as a statutory consultee.

## 21 **Progress of Scope for Exmouth Beach Management Plan**

The Group had been provided with the project scope update, which set out:

- The current Exmouth Beach Management Plan
- Developments since the current plan was adopted in 2015
- Producing an updated Plan that covered the area in the adopted plan, plus consideration of the wider sediment system within which the BMP area is situated and in line with good practice set out in the CIRIA Beach Management Manual (this will include an element of the Marina)
- Engagement with key stakeholders at key points in the project, including a 3 month consultation period to seek views on the leading options.

The project would be overseen by a Project Board.

Mr Frampton, from BCP Council (consultant) ran through the update report to the Group, highlighting the pictorial evidence of changes in the coastline between 2007 and 2021.

Members of the Group did provide feedback on the current condition of the sea wall that needed attention, which was noted and will be followed up by the relevant officer.

The Engineering Projects Manager outlined the progress so far, which covered:

- The scope was now written as set out in the report and ready to be tendered;
- Feedback from the Group to date had been taken into consideration;
- The scope had been balanced with the likely funding limit.

Over and above the 2015 BMP, the additions to the plan were:

- Implications of constructing a new groyne in close proximity to the RNLI slipway;
- Viability of restoring and retaining sand dunes in the vicinity of the Maer within BMP Management Unit 2, either now or in the future;
- How best to reduce sand loss, and increase levels if possible both for a coastal protection and amenity benefit;
- How best to maintain levels in front of the seawall.

22 **Timetable**

The timetable for the project was currently set out as:

- January 2023 tender scope to market
- March 2023 – close tender and appoint consultant
- April 2023 – contract to start
- September 2024 – contract to complete

In response to a question from the Chair regarding additional funding, the scope does include ask for a wider gross value added assessment alongside the traditional calculation for coastal defence funding. Whilst this will not unlock any funding from the Environment Agency, it does give an indication to the authority of the wider benefits of maintaining the amenity.

**Attendance List**

Councillor P Millar (Chair) EDDC  
Councillor O Davey EDDC  
Councillor N Hookway EDDC  
Councillor G Jung, EDDC

Chetna Jones, Deputy Clerk of Exmouth Town Council  
Harriet Googe, Environment Agency  
Councillor Pauline Stott, Exmouth Town Council  
Zoey Cooper, Climate & Ecological Resilience Officer, Exmouth Town Council  
Stephanie Harper-Chung, Exe Estuary Officer, Exe Estuary Management Partnership

**Officers in attendance:**

Tom Buxton-Smith, Engineering Projects Manager  
Alan Frampton, BCP Council  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

**Apologies:**

Councillor E Wragg, EDDC  
Edward John Morgan, Exmouth Water Sports  
Ralph Collison, Exmouth Water Users Group  
Max Underhill, RNLI  
Councillor Tim Dumper, Exmouth Town Council

Chair .....

Date: .....