

SOUTHERN COASTAL GROUP

BUSINESS PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2008 the Environment Agency was given a 'Strategic overview' role for future management of coastal erosion and sea flooding risks in England. The role included the implementation of the intention that Coastal Groups should become more strategic and play a stronger role in the future planning of flood and coastal erosion risk management. In addition the Coastal Groups would advise the Environment Agency and be represented on the Regional Flood Defence Committees.

Following a review of Coastal Group boundaries it was agreed that the Southern Coastal Group should assist with flood and coastal erosion risk management for Cell 5 which extends from Portland Bill in Dorset to Selsey Bill in West Sussex including the Isle of Wight coastline. As part of the restructuring the Southern Coastal Group has developed a new Constitution including Terms of Reference which were approved at the first meeting of the new Group held on 14th November 2008.

The Key Policy Aim of the Southern Coastal Group is as follows:-

'To give sound advice on coastal issues and be a strong influencer in optimising strategic and sustainable policies, plans and programmes to best manage coastal risks. To be a natural and chosen forum for coastal practitioners to discuss coastal defence problems and share best practice. To be efficient in operation and to provide best value to the public purse.

This Business Plan sets out each of the Principal and Secondary Objectives identified in the Constitution and identifies how these will be delivered by the Group. In addition an Action Plan is provided in order that progress may be monitored against each objective

Through the delivery of this Business Plan and the accompanying Action Plan the Southern Coastal Group expects to play an important role in influencing and assisting the Medium Term Planning process. Furthermore the Southern Coastal Group will support the delivery of Shoreline Management Plans, Strategy Studies and schemes by providing co-ordination, facilitating communications, and offering advice and guidance to its members.

PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES

1. INFLUENCING SUSTAINABLE COASTAL RISK MANAGEMENT

- 1.1. As a technical group comprising coastal managers, planners and others with a knowledge of shoreline management, who operate in a strategic framework, the Group shall be a source of expertise on the coast and shall advise and influence the Regional Flood Defence Committee(s) and other stakeholders on matters relating to the coast. The Chairman shall attend the Regional Flood Defence Committee (RFDC) meetings and work closely with officers and members.

DELIVERY: The Chairman of the Southern Coastal Group or his Deputy will represent the Group in an advisory capacity at the meeting of the Regional Flood Defence Committee(s).

The Chairman will be an expert advisor to the Committee on matters relating to coastal erosion risk management and will present reports and promote initiatives from time to time as required or when requested in consultation with Environment Agency (EA) Officers and the RFDC Chairman.

The Chairman will attend the RFDC meetings with the Chairman of the Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline (SCOPAC) with whom the Southern Coastal Group works in close partnership.

The Southern Coastal Group will work closely with the full range of coastal stakeholders it represents including, in particular, the Solent Forum and Dorset Coast Forum.

- 1.2. The Group shall contribute to the Environment Agency's preparation and implementation of a long-term investment strategy for the management of flood and coastal erosion risks including both long-term plans and delivery of annual programmes of works and maintenance.

DELIVERY: The Southern Coastal Group will work closely with the Environment Agency to assist the collation of data from its constituent Operating Authority members and will encourage timely responses to requests for information and completion of returns to allow preparation of annual and medium term programmes.

The Group will assist the EA by disseminating information regarding timescales for responses to consultations and will provide advice and guidance to its members to ensure successful completion of returns.

2. SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

2.1. BUSINESS PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORT

To prepare a Business Plan and Annual Report for the Group and to present them to the Coastal Forum.

DELIVERY: The Chairman shall prepare a draft Business Plan for consideration by the Group; the Plan shall be updated annually. An Annual Activity Report shall be prepared for the Group in the early summer of each year. Both the Business Plan and the Annual Report shall be passed, after approval, to the Chairman of the Coastal Groups for submission to the Coastal Forum for its information.

2.2. LEAD BODY FOR PREPARATION OF SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLANS

To recommend to the Environment Agency who is best placed to undertake the lead for individual shoreline management plans.

DELIVERY: The Southern Coastal Group shall convene a workshop to consider successes and problems with the Round Two SMPs within its area. The workshop will also consider issues relating to scope and geographical extent of each plan. The results of the workshop, which will have involved participation by the full range of Southern Coastal Group membership, shall form the basis for decisions on which bodies should be the lead authority for each of the Round Three SMPs.

2.3. PROMOTING THE VIEWS OF COASTAL GROUP MEMBERS

Through discussion with Defra, SCOPAC, RFDC Chairmen and the Environment Agency, to ensure the views of member organisations are considered in the development and implementation of national policies and initiatives relating to coastal risk management.

DELIVERY: The Chairman, through close working with the Chairmen of Coastal Groups nationally, shall ensure that the views of its members will receive full and proper consideration when national policies and initiatives are being developed. The Southern Coastal Group shall continue to fulfil an important role by submitting well argued, comprehensive responses to government and other consultations on behalf of its membership. These views will take account of discussions at other relevant meetings including the Coastal Forum, LGA SIG, TAG and Chairmen of Coastal Groups.

2.4. CLOSE WORKING WITH REGIONAL FLOOD DEFENCE COMMITTEES

To work closely with adjacent Coastal Groups and the Environment Agency's Regional Flood Defence Committee(s) in advising on managing flood and coastal erosion risks at the shoreline.

DELIVERY: Through the streamlined network of Coastal Groups developed as part of the Environment Agency Strategic Overview the Coastal Groups have resolved to continue and strengthen their joint-working, assisting each other as required. This collaboration includes exchanging information on practical experiences and best practice as well as sharing and hosting conferences, workshops, events, field visits and exhibition stands together with joint publications and websites. By agreement Coast Protection Authorities are also

sharing skills and resources as well as collaborating by sharing data and promoting research (see 2.5 below).

Through a standardisation of approach being promoted by the Coastal Groups nationally information is being disseminated consistently to the RFDCs and other forums (see also 1.1 above).

2.5. RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

2.5.1 To advise upon research and development needs within the sediment cell in relation to issues of coastal engineering, shoreline management, coastal zone management and monitoring.

2.5.2. Through close working in equal partnership with SCOPAC assist the successful delivery of SCOPAC's research programme.

DELIVERY: The Southern Coastal Group, through its Research Sub-Group, is taking forward SCOPAC's coastal research programme. The Southern Coastal Group shall follow the priorities for research approved by SCOPAC at its meeting on 15th February 2008, Item 28 (ii), following completion of the 'Research Review'. The following programme of work shall be, supervised and implemented subject to availability of resources:-

- Adapting to Coastal Change Along England's Southern Shorelines (ACCESS): Channel Coast Observatory £26,000, Halcrow £17,500, Isle of Wight Centre £14,000, Management/Printing £11,100, Contingencies £3,000. 2008/09-2009/10.
- Extreme wave conditions study: Professor A Bradbury £10,000 (2008/09), £8,000 (2009/10).
- Contribution to CIRIA Beach management manual £10,000 (2008/09).
- Maintenance of coastal structures Phase 1 Timber groynes – Professor A Bradbury/CCO £18,000 (2009/10-2010/11).
- Contributions to minor studies: £4,000 unallocated – budget delegated to Southern Coastal Group (2009/10).
- Evolution of coastal sediment sinks: Southampton University/CCO - £25,000 (2010/11).
- Validation of new Met office wave data: CCO/Southampton University £15,000 (2010/11), £10,000 (2011/12).
- Climate change local scenarios study: External consultants £35,000(2011/12), £35,000 (2012/13).
- Saltmarsh evolution study: CCO - £15,000 (2012/13), £10,000 (2013/14).

- Design guidance for mixed beaches - £30,000 (2013/14), £30,000 (2014/15).

In addition the Southern Coastal Group shall provide expert advice on research proposals being developed or undertaken by others in the field of coastal risk management.

2.6. ROLE AS A FORUM FOR COASTAL MANAGERS.

To act as a forum for coastal managers within the maritime authorities, the Environment Agency, port managers and others within the region.

DELIVERY: The Group shall act as a Forum for its membership including Coast Protection Operating Authorities, harbour and estuary managers and representatives of NGOs and the Coastal Fora. The prime focus is flood and coastal erosion risk management, however, the Group shall receive regular updates on progress with integrated coastal zone management and other wider issues of relevance to sustainable management and planning.

2.7. SHARING EXPERTISE AND BEST PRACTICE

2.7.1. To share expertise and examples of best practice between Group members and to share resources between member organisations when mutually acceptable and advantageous.

2.7.2. To identify and share best practice with regard to procurement, delivery and general management of coastal erosion and sea flooding risks; to influence members to adopt best practice.

DELIVERY: The Southern Coastal Group, in partnership with SCOPAC, shall continue its long-standing role in the development of guidance and best practice through:-

- The arrangement of conferences, events, workshops and technical field meetings.
- Publication of advice and guidance in 2009 including 'A non-technical guide to coastal risk management', 'South-East of England SMP and Strategies Map' and an EA and Coastal Groups – Working together leaflet'.

The Group shall promote and disseminate best practice with respect to consultations, procurement procedures and management practices which are creative and engaging, inclusive and accessible, transparent and accountable, non-political and based upon sound science.

2.8. COLLECTION AND STORAGE OF DATA AND MONITORING PROGRAMMES

2.8.1. To encourage the development of a co-ordinated approach to the collection and storage of data relevant to the effective management of risks along the shoreline.

2.8.2. To continue development of regional strategic monitoring programmes and work with the Environment Agency towards the creation of a co-ordinated and integrated national strategic monitoring programme.

DELIVERY: The Southern Coastal Group and adjacent Coastal Groups led by New Forest district Council and the Channel Coast Observatory, in partnership with the Environment Agency and Defra, have been influential in developing and promoting strategic regional monitoring. The value of this approach is readily appreciated by the membership of the Southern Coastal Group.

The Group supports and encourages the collation and storage of relevant data and through the Channel Coast Observatory provides advice and guidance to Southern Coastal Group members and others as well as making available outputs from the monitoring programme; the results are disseminated at an Annual Meeting held each autumn and an Annual Report will be distributed. The Group strongly supports the establishment of the new Project Board for the national monitoring programme to take forward strategic monitoring after April 2011.