

Minutes of the Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline (SCOPAC) held in Hurstwood Room, Public Service Plaza, Civic Centre Road, Havant, Hampshire PO9 2AX on 21 June 2019 commencing at 10.00 am

Present: A list of those present is appended to these minutes

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tom Davies, Councillor Hugh Mason, Councillor Alan Alvey, Councillor Graeme Barrett, Councillor Steve Leggett, Dominic Henly, Gordon Wilkinson, Steve Cook, Stuart McVey, Nick Hardiman, Tim Adams, Jonathan Potts, Vincent May and Bryan Curtis.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the SCOPAC meeting held on 18 January 2019 be approved as a correct record.

3 Southern Coastal Group Chairman's Update - Lyall Cairns

The Chairman invited Lyall Cairns to provide a brief introduction to SCOPAC for new members and an overview on the work undertaken in the coastal sector since the last meeting.

The following areas were highlighted:

- The Southern Coastal Group (SCG) Chairman had attended a number of meetings as a representative of the Group, including meetings of the National Coastal Group Chairs, National FCERM Strategy Stakeholder Group, Southern RFCC and the EA Coastal Practitioners Workshop in Lincolnshire. The sector was experiencing a period of change, with a move away from a 'command and control' ethos and towards partnership working, a 'bold new approach' and the inclusion of elements such as businesses, health and infrastructure alongside the protection of homes. This links in to the prominent 'place shaping' message that features in local government. Discussions on funding were also underway between DEFRA and the Treasury.
- SCOPAC and SCG Local Levy Bid – The SCG had successfully bid for funding from both the Southern and Wessex RFCCs of £46,000 to support delivery of the Group's main ambitions for 2019/20. This approach was now common practice at other Groups nationally, with examples of officer posts being funded through local levy bids.
- National FCERM Strategy Consultation – This would be covered in a later item.
- SMP Refresh – This update would not constitute a full review and would instead take the form of a 'MOT' style test of the current plans, with issues highlighted to be 'fixed' at a later date.

4 Finances, Business Plan and Southern Coastal Group Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy Bid - Lyall Cairns

The Chairman invited Lyall Cairns to introduce the SCG / SCOPAC Financial Report and the Business Plan for the Group.

The Business Plan had been fully reviewed and refreshed, with lead officers now assigned to each plan item.

The Financial Report informed the Group that there had been a surplus of £14,894.96 for the 2018/19 financial year, with a surplus of approximately £6,000 forecast for the 2019/20 financial year. Officers felt that this continued to represent good value for money.

The current financial predictions would require close monitoring and the Group were anticipating lower subscriptions to previous years, with the withdrawal of Hampshire County Council and the Dorset Devolutions.

5 Research Update - Samantha Cope

The Chairman invited Dr Samantha Cope to provide an update on the progress of the 5 Year Research Programme.

The programme was in its final year and had spent approximately £100,000 on research projects during its lifetime. This included 16 projects, 3 of which were classed as major (over £10,000). The investment represented excellent value for money as projects were often conducted by in-house resource with occasional student support. The SCOPAC funding investment had returned at least £300,000 in other contributions across the programme.

The research also provided highly-valued resources and wider benefits to the coastal sector, with projects such as the Scanning of Historical Photography and SCOPAC Storm Analysis benefitting the majority of SCOPAC members. Other research such as the SCOPAC Landfills Study and CIRIA Groynes in Coastal Management are of national significance.

The update included the following topics:

- SCOPAC Landfills Study – SCOPAC research had helped to progress this national issue. The final report and infographic can be found on the website via the following link: <https://scopac.org.uk/research/scopac-landfills-study/>.
- Dismantling of Timber Groynes – Reports from the project were available online via the following link: <https://scopac.org.uk/research/performance-of-timber-groynes-bournemouth/>. The results would be presented to SCOPAC at a future meeting.
- Bradburys Bursary – The bursary had been awarded to Xue Ting Ong (Gladys) from the University of Southampton, who is investigating hydrodynamic controls on nearshore sediment sizes in Poole Bay (scoping report can be found online via the following link: <https://scopac.org.uk/research/bradburys-bursary/>). The results of the study would be presented to SCOPAC at a future meeting.

Dr Cope informed the Group that the SCOPAC and SCG websites had been refreshed, and included details of all on-going research projects.

The Group discussed possible items for the next research programme, with members suggesting items on coastal cultural / heritage assets (as concerns were raised that there was not consistent mapping of these assets) and the balance of natural environment versus community and economic concerns as possible inclusions.

It was suggested that a presentation could be given at a future SCOPAC meeting on potential approaches to mapping heritage assets.

6 Draft National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England Consultation - Neil Watson / Mark Stratton

The Chairman invited Neil Watson to provide a presentation on the National FCERM Strategy consultation.

The Strategy was being updated with a renewed focus to provide climate resilient places, better and more adaptable infrastructure and a culture of climate champions. The updates reflected the move towards partnership working, with a more prominent emphasis on 'place shaping' in coastal communities.

The Strategy was out to consultation until 4 July, with the final document scheduled to go before Parliament in October 2019 prior to publication in 2020.

During the discussion, it was again highlighted that the ethos had changed from protecting the coastline to adaptation and resilience in coastal communities. It was also emphasised that as representatives from local authorities at the coastline, there was an expectation amongst residents that SCOPAC would champion causes and encourage engagement with coastal communities.

7 Shoreline Management Plan Refresh - Neil Watson / Mark Stratton

The Chairman invited Mark Stratton to provide an overview on the SMP Refresh.

The Shoreline Management Plans form a key policy document for the aspirational management of the coastline over the next 100 years, and are regularly used by officers when considering actions and strategies at the coast.

The refresh would not be a full review, but was a 'MOT' style test of the current plans, with the aim of ensuring that the Plans were as accessible and consistent as possible, and that the right people were involved in the management of the coastline (including planners).

During the discussion on this item, members highlighted the need to incorporate key messages such as the impact of climate change and sea level rise as well as the recent prominent ambition of resilient coastal communities. This could form a central part of any wider communications or public engagement when this is conducted at a later stage, with the requirement for consistent, clear and easily accessible information essential.

8 SCOPAC Annual Site Visit: Weymouth and Portland - Neil Watson

The Chairman invited Neil Watson to introduce the proposal for the 2019 SCOPAC Annual Site Visit to Weymouth and Portland.

The proposed sites represented good examples of the issues being experienced at smaller coastal sites, where there were no current schemes or developments in place. The sites had also experienced extreme coastal events, and the visit would allow the Group to gain a first-hand appreciation of the problems in these areas.

The Group were supportive of attending these locations in September, while the visit could also incorporate the September meeting of the SCG.

It was AGREED that;

- a) A provisional date of Thursday 19 September be set for the SCOPAC Annual Site Visit 2019 to Weymouth and Portland; and
- b) An invitation be circulated to SCOPAC members for this date.

9 Reshaping and Refreshing the Group - Lyall Cairns / Matt Hosey

The Chairman invited Lyall Cairns to introduce the debate on the future directions of the Group.

Continuing financial pressures on local government and a reduction in subscriptions meant that members would need to consider the fee structure and alternative models at meetings.

Potential solutions included a fee structure based on tiers of membership or length of coastline, scrapping subscription fees leading to a reduction in the research programme (with projects funded through grants etc.) or holding events such as conferences, although these won't bring in enough income to cover the research programme or business as usual. The Constitution was in need of a refresh, with a possible renewed focus on political influence and research projects.

Members were also informed that the current terms of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of SCOPAC were due to end at the October meeting of the Group.

The Group discussed possible solutions. During the discussion, members highlighted the continued value of SCOPAC in providing a key link between officers and elected members to discuss issues at the coastline but recognised the need for a refreshed Group structure.

It was AGREED that;

- a) The SCOPAC Constitution, the presentation slides and a survey on options moving forward for membership arrangements and subscription fee structures be circulated to SCOPAC members for comment; and
- b) Responses be filtered for proposals to be presented to SCOPAC for decision at the next SCOPAC meeting.

10 AOB

Charlie Thompson informed the Group that responses to the Coastal Monitoring Programme consultation were due by 5 July 2019.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 12.15 pm

STANDING CONFERENCE ON PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE COASTLINE

21 JUNE 2019 – LIST OF REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDING

Councillor Mary Penfold – Chairman of SCOPAC
Mr L Cairns– Chairman of Southern Coastal Group

Richard Austin, Chichester Harbour Conservancy
Councillor Piers Bateman, Gosport Borough Council
Councillor Jackie Branson, Chichester Harbour Conservancy
Michelle Brockley, Environment Agency
Tristan Brougham, Chichester Harbour Conservancy
Peter Christie, Dorset Council Partnership
Dr Samantha Cope, Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership
Keith Dee, BWL
Uwe Dornbusch, Environment Agency
Councillor Keith Evans, Fareham Borough Council
Nick Gray, Environment Agency
Councillor John Hobart, Isle of Wight Council
Mr Matt Hosey, BCP Council
Martin Hurst, Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
Jenny Jakeways, Isle of Wight Council
Councillor Kevin Jenkins, Worthing Borough Council
Mr David Lowsley, Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
Angela Marlow, Natural England
Andrew Pearce, Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership
David Pickett, Eastleigh Borough Council
Councillor Felicity Rice, BCP Council
Mr Stevyn Ricketts, Gosport Borough Council
Mark Stratton, Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership
Charlie Thompson, Channel Coastal Observatory
Councillor Leah Turner, Havant Borough Council
Mr Neil Watson, Environment Agency
Richard White, Environment Agency
Tania White, Environment Agency