

Title of meeting: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 4 December 2018

Subject: Summer 2018 Seafront consultations review

Report by: Assistant Director of City Development and Coastal & Drainage Manager

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is to:

- Advise Members of the outcomes of the public consultation on the Southsea Coastal Scheme preferred option and the revision of the Seafront Masterplan SPD Review.
- Advise Members on the key emerging issues that will influence the design of the Coastal Scheme and the preparation of the planning application and associated consultation and the range of work that will be undertaken to prepare a draft Seafront Masterplan SPD for its next stage of consultation.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Members:

- 1. Note the representations received during the consultation on the Seafront Masterplan SPD Review and the Southsea Coastal Scheme which will inform the development of both projects.**
- 2. Endorse the further technical work to produce a draft revised Seafront Masterplan SPD for consultation.**
- 3. Agree that public engagement is undertaken on the preferred option for the Southsea Coastal Scheme to inform the preparation of the planning application and the supporting Statement of Community Involvement.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The council made a decision to run the initial public consultation on the Seafront Masterplan SPD Review at the same time as the 'preferred options consultation' for the Southsea Coastal Scheme. This was so the public's feedback could be captured in full, and that any themes arising that fall outside the remit of either consultation could be reflected in a holistic fashion.
- 3.2 **The Southsea Coastal Scheme** is a significant investment (c£120m) in the infrastructure of the area in order to reduce the risk of coastal flooding and erosion. The scheme covers 4.5km (2.8miles) of coastline from the Royal Garrison Church to the Royal Marines Museum. The scheme is designed to protect over 8,000 existing properties, 700 businesses, multiple heritage sites and key infrastructure from the risk of flooding together with any future development that may occur within the flood zone. Approximately 4,000 of these properties are at risk of direct inundation from flooding.
- 3.2 Recommendations from the Shoreline Management Plan and the Portsea Island Coastal Strategy were used to develop coastal defence options. From this, an outline concept design was developed and submitted to central government as part of an outline business case. The project is now moving through the design development, consultation, principal design, consenting and detailed design phases.
- 3.3 The Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership (ESCP) are leading on the project on behalf of Portsmouth City Council (PCC). A specialist team is working with them to assist with the design of the scheme. This team includes Balfour Beatty, a UK-headquartered international infrastructure firm, supported by Arup, a global leader in the design of green infrastructure projects and by specialist consultant, Ramboll. The scheme is funded and assured by the Environment Agency, DEFRA and HM Treasury.
- 3.4 The seafront, along with Southsea Common, is a focal point for recreation and tourism and is probably the city's best example of a well-used and versatile green infrastructure asset and the most heavily visited section of the Solent coast. It is therefore hugely important for the city and precious to the city's identity.
- 3.5 The scheme has evolved significantly from the outline design submitted to central government to access funding for design development in 2016. The design will continue to adapt to external factors, such as ground conditions, to ensure a technically appropriate solution is found.
- 3.6 **The Seafront Masterplan SPD** (Supplementary Planning Document), sets out the planning delivery strategy for guiding, shaping, and enabling future development, regeneration, and public realm enhancement opportunities within the seafront area. It was adopted in 2013 in the knowledge that a sea defences scheme would come forward but without certainty to the timing or detail of the project. As the Southsea Coastal Scheme is now at an advanced stage, and in the light of the opportunity the defences could bring to the seafront and improve the public realm,

the SPD is being revised to make it a more ambitious document with a greater focus on delivery in the implementation phase.

- 3.7 Whilst the consultation on the Southsea Coastal Scheme and the initial consultation on the review of the Seafront Masterplan are separate matters, many of the responses to the Coastal Scheme are relevant to the review of the SPD and will be considered and used to inform its revision.
- 3.8 The review to the SPD is independent of the review of the Local Plan. Whilst the review of the Local Plan will look at the Seafront and consider the role it will play in the future of the city the review of the SPD will work to a shorter timetable and will be supported by the current Local Plan, specifically Policy PCS9 (The Seafront).

4 Consultation

- 4.1 The consultation programme extended from the beginning of July to the end of August. Every household in the city was sent literature advertising both the Sea Defences Scheme and the Seafront SPD. This ran alongside an integrated awareness campaign including outdoor advertising on telephone boxes in Southsea. Digital marketing was a key component, with a Facebook reach of 215,034 users, and a further 10,933 users that engaged with our content (comments, reactions etc.).
- 4.2 Officers representing both consultations, as well as staff from Southsea Coastal Scheme partner organisations were present at the exhibition events. Dedicated exhibition materials for each consultation were produced, so they could be easily delineated by the public. Over 1700 people attended the seven consultation events.

Date/Time:	Location:
4 July, 1pm-7pm	Eastney Community Centre, Eastney
6 July, 1.30pm- 7.30pm	Canoe Lake Tennis Pavilion, Southsea
10 July, 1pm-7pm	Aspex Gallery, Old Portsmouth
11 July, 3pm-7pm	Anchorage Park Community Centre, Anchorage Park
12 July, 1pm-7pm	St Jude's Church, Southsea
16 July, 3pm-7pm	Cosham Community Centre, Cosham
17 July, 1pm-7pm	Royal Naval Club & Royal Albert Yacht Club, Old Portsmouth
20 July, 1pm-7pm	Fratton Community Centre, Fratton

- 4.3 Officers representing both consultations, as well as staff from Southsea Coastal Scheme partner organisations were also present at three interactive technical design workshops. This enabled interest groups and local residents to interrogate rigorously the emerging designs (and the technical experts!). The first two events were comprised of invited guests from interest groups in the city. A third event was held comprising of people who had expressed an interest at the consultation events.
- 4.4 The **Southsea Coastal Scheme** consultation (the second of three consultations on the Coastal Scheme, known as the 'preferred options' consultation) provided detail

on the preferred option and other potential options in eight areas of the seafront. It built on previous consultations undertaken in 2014 and 2017. The consultation focussed on the sea defence itself and the works that would form the planning application. Any enhancements that cannot be paid for from FDGiA (Flood Defence Grant-in-Aid) will not form part of the Southsea Coastal Scheme or the planning application.

Design factors that stakeholders could influence included road use at Southsea Common and Canoe Lake/Rose Gardens, shape of the grass bund interface and positioning of monuments at Southsea Common, the promenade height and interface at South Parade Pier and whether to rely solely on the beach to provide flood protection for the next 50 years at Eastney Esplanade.

All options presented were technically feasible and would provide the required standard of protection to access funding to build the scheme. The overall support for options in each area was measured, along with the public's opinions on what they would like to see prioritised in each area.

- 4.5 Southsea Coastal Scheme preferred options consultation material and survey were published online on the Scheme's website from the 3rd July 2018. The survey was open for responses until 27th August 2018 and 1427 (305 written/1122 online) consultation questionnaire responses were received. Considerable effort and thought went into the responses - the average time taken responding was 25 minutes. The website received 9198 unique users during the consultation period and the scheme visualisation was viewed 3800 times. Detailed responses were received from the Portsmouth Society, Clarence Pier (c/o Vail Williams) and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.
- 4.6 The responses to the Southsea Coastal Scheme consultation are available on the Scheme's website at <https://southseacoastalscheme.org.uk/resources/summer-consultation-report/> and a summary is set out in Appendix 1.

The **Seafront Masterplan SPD Review** consultation document was published on 2nd July 2018 for an 8 week period, with a closing date for representations of 27th August 2018. The document was made available on the city council's website, and printed copies were made available at the Civic Offices as well as at all libraries and community centres in the city. Comments were invited in the form of a paper questionnaire, an online survey, post, and email. A total of 222 responses were received; 210 from individuals and 12 on behalf of the following organisations/companies :

- i. Crime Prevention Design Advisor, Hampshire Constabulary
- ii. Gosport Borough Council
- iii. Southern Water
- iv. Clarence Pier (c/o Vail Williams)
- v. Portsmouth City Council Transport Planning
- vi. Cumberland House Natural History Museum Friends
- vii. Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

- viii. Barton Willmore
- ix. Historic England
- x. Portsmouth Cycle Forum
- xi. Natural England
- xii. 'Southsea Seafront Campaign'

5. Summary of consultation responses

- 5.1 **Southsea Coastal Scheme** Several themes for the entire frontage were evident from this consultation. Transport issues featured heavily, with demands for better cycling provision, even in areas where cycling is not an option at the moment (such as Long Curtain Moat and Southsea Castle). Parking provision was also a big concern if pedestrianisation was chosen on either Canoe Lake or Southsea Common. In comparison, traffic displacement as a result of pedestrianisation was seen as much more of an issue at Canoe Lake than at Southsea Common. These issues led to a clear majority of people wishing to retain a road in both locations.
- 5.2 There was a wish for sea views from the promenade to be retained in all areas of the seafront where there is one now. It was felt that the design solution in most areas of the seafront had achieved this; however there were concerns about both proposals at South Parade Pier and how they may impact on the existing sea views.
- 5.3 Access was also seen as being very important, with requests for the design to ensure equal access for all users to the seafront.
- 5.4 The protection of heritage assets was a major issue at Long Curtain Moat and Southsea Castle.
- 5.5 At Clarence Pier, some stakeholders felt it would be better to redevelop this area now before the defences were built so they didn't have to be set back, whilst others were keen on the 'seaside' feel of the area and wanted to see the existing buildings protected. However, there was a general consensus that the current solution was the best, given that the scheme itself cannot drive the redevelopment of the area through the funding provided for the sea defences.
- 5.6 Environmental improvements and preserving the natural 'feel' of the area were more of concern in the eastern areas of the scheme. In the case of Eastney Esplanade, the largest group of respondents wished for the construction of any scheme to be delayed and to rely on the beach for protection for the next 50 years instead, so the impact in this area would be minimised.
- 5.7 A full report detailing the results of the consultation is available in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 5.8 **The Seafront Masterplan SPD** consultation booklet and its online survey A set of 46 questions were posed, both in. Participants were not required to answer all the questions. The full responses to the Seafront Masterplan SPD consultation are

available on the Portsmouth City Council website hyperlink. A summary report is at Appendix 2. However, the following issues are highlighted from the responses as they will shape future work.

- 5.9 Amendment(s) to the SPD boundary: The results suggest that majority of respondents do not favour a revision to the current SPD boundary. Of those that suggested other geographical areas, these are already covered under existing SPDs (e.g. The Hard) or under specific policies in the Local Plan (e.g. Langstone Harbour coastline).
- 5.10 Vision and Objectives: When asked whether the SPD should continue to focus on making Portsmouth 'a great place to visit, or focus on living and working', or something else, 135 out of 191 respondents suggested that it should focus on 'living, working and tourism'. When asked which of the existing objectives of the adopted SPD should be retained, 196 people responded, as follows:

Objective	No. supporting retention	% of respondents
Introducing a vibrant mix of leisure and tourism uses to the area, including small scale cafes and restaurants, that will attract people to the Seafront all year round	118	60.2
Ensuring that the design of new attractions and public spaces is distinctive and of a high quality, and that it is sensitive to, and enhances, the character of the area	131	66.8
Conserving and enhancing the Seafront's historic environment and heritage assets	146	74.5
Strengthening routes between Old Portsmouth and Eastney Beach, and to other parts of the city	78	39.8
Protecting the open nature of Southsea Common and other public spaces, and the valuable wildlife habitat at Eastney Beach	148	75.5
Ensuring that the new sea defences integrate sensitively with the local environment and provide	156	79.6

- 5.11 New or additional objectives: When asked about new or additional objectives for the SPD to address, the top five topics suggested by the 153 respondents were: parking provision; air quality; cycling provision; accessibility to sea/beach; and landscaping. These topic areas will be taken forward for consideration in the development of the Seafront SPD.
- 5.12 To address the issues raised in the consultation and to inform the production of a revised SPD, the following work is recommended to be undertaken:

- Work to identify all development of opportunities including consideration of existing uses
- Work to inform public realm improvements including landscaping, lighting , public art, play facilities and street furniture Work around connectivity, walking and cycling and how space is used along the seafront
- As necessary, further Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal, and Habitats Regulations Assessment work;
- Assessment of infrastructure requirements, funding, and delivery
- Further work relating to beach uses and beach access
- Key issues around proposed future plans for some key sites along the Seafront

5.13 The above work will require collaboration across the Council and with other key stakeholder in the city. A full engagement strategy will be developed as an early action.

6. Next steps

6.1 Clearly, there is a vast amount of valuable feedback and opinion from the public and interested parties (Appendices 1 & 2) that will help shape both the Southsea Coastal Scheme design and the progression of the Seafront Masterplan SPD. The consultation has been a valuable exercise in capturing views and opinions about the seafront. It has stimulated debate on the seafront in terms of its current and future contribution to the economy and vitality of the city, its cultural heritage and its role as green infrastructure for the city. All of the issues raised will be considered as part of the review of the spatial strategy to regenerate the seafront as a whole having regard to the proposed 'Southsea Coastal Scheme' sea defences and how this could open up opportunities for the seafront area.

6.2 For the Southsea Coastal Scheme, the main issues arising from the consultation that will inform the development of the design and implementation of the sea defences are:

- Work to further reduce defence heights by utilising the shingle beach where appropriate.
- Specifically, a revised design at South Parade Pier which will utilise a wider beach so less rock is required (that can be buried beneath the shingle) and lower defence heights.
- Retention of vehicular access at Southsea Common and Canoe Lake/Rose Gardens.
- Retention of some on-street parking by Canoe Lake/Rose Gardens
- Relying on the beach to provide protection at Eastney Esplanade for the next 50 years.
- Ensuring equal access for all as part of the designs.

6.3 Work is progressing on all these issues, as well as incorporating the latest information from ground condition and hydrological surveys. This particularly

influences King's Bastion and Southsea Castle (frontages 1 & 4), where cost-estimates have risen considerably as a result of poor ground conditions requiring substantial additional piling (up to 25m deep). This has significant implications for meeting an already stretched and complex funding regime. The priorities, timescales, processes and funding criteria of the contributory government agencies differ, as does their available grant in aid (in simplistic terms: Environment Agency primarily driven by protection of existing dwellings not heritage; Solent Local Enterprise Partnership driven by new housing and new businesses, not protection; Historic England by protection and interpretation of heritage assets not coastal protection). The intention remains to submit for planning permission early in the New Year and to submit the Full Business Case to the Environment Agency and HM Treasury before March. These timescales are important as the Environment Agency funding is cyclical. Missing this round could delay the implementation of the scheme by a minimum of 2 years, and would add even more uncertainty to securing the funding.

For the Seafront Masterplan SPD, the next step will be to complete the work outlined above. This will inform the next key stage, which will be to produce a draft publication version of the revised SPD to inform the next round of public consultation. This is envisaged to occur before summer 2019.

7. Reasons for recommendations

- 7.1 Member consideration of the responses received to the Southsea Coastal Scheme and Seafront Masterplan SPD consultations will inform the final design of the sea defence scheme for submission for planning permission and the further development of the Seafront Masterplan SPD.
- 7.2 Member endorsement of the approach set out in the report will enable the work now need to produce a revised Seafront Masterplan SPD.
- 7.3 Member endorsement of the approach set out in the report will enable the Southsea Coastal Scheme 'preferred option' to be further developed as the design to be consulted on to inform the Statement of Community Involvement and associated public engagement, as the next step towards the submission of a planning application.

8. Equality impact assessment

- 8.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out for the Southsea Coastal Scheme, and did not highlight any specific issues relating to equality groups in the city (Appendix 4). When the consultation process is complete, the EqIA will be reviewed.
- 8.2 A full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was previously carried out on the Portsmouth Plan (Core Strategy), including Policy PCS9: 'The seafront', and on the currently adopted Seafront Masterplan SPD (April 2013). These EqIA's did not highlight any specific issues relating to equality groups in the city. (Appendix 5)

8.3 This initial consultation has only sought opinions on planning-related issues concerning the future of the seafront to inform the SPD review. Nevertheless, a full EqlA has been carried out as an initial update of the earlier EqlA conducted for the current SPD. This updated EqlA has not highlighted any specific issues relating to equality groups in the city. As further work progresses the need for a EqlA will be reviewed.

9. Legal implications

9.1 Preparation of the Council's supplementary planning documents, including the process of public consultation, is regulated in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Publication, consultation with appropriate stakeholders, and receiving and considering relevant representations are necessary steps towards adoption, and the report and recommendation support compliance with the Council's statutory obligations as Local Planning Authority.

9.2 The further public engagement on the Southsea Coastal Scheme 'preferred option' will inform the planning application, in accordance with guidance set out in the NPPF.

10. Director of Finance's comments

10.1 The Council has made provision for a significant contribution to the Southsea Coastal Scheme (£7.1m). The difficulties of piecing together funding across a number of government departments and agencies is reflected in the report (para 6.3) and discussions to secure all necessary funding for the scheme remain ongoing.

10.2 The Seafront Masterplan is expected to be completed during the summer of 2019. Whilst the Masterplan is expected to be completed within approved Portfolio budgets there are potential additional costs relating to specialist input and the final production of printed material, but these are not expected to exceed £10,000. In the event that these costs cannot be met directly from the approved Portfolio budget in 2019/20 they will be funded from the Portfolio Reserve.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Southsea Coastal Scheme: Preferred options consultation, Consultation report

Appendix 2: Seafront Masterplan SPD Review Consultation booklet

Appendix 3: Seafront Masterplan SPD Review: Consultation Summary of Consultation Responses to the July - August 2018 Public Consultation

Appendix 4: Southsea Coastal Scheme Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 5: Seafront Masterplan SPD Review Equality Impact Assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Seafront Masterplan SPD (adopted April 2013)	https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/dev-seafront-masterplan-final.pdf
Seafront Masterplan SPD Review consultation document (July 2018)	https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/dev-seafront-masterplan-spd-review-consultation-doc.pdf
Southsea Coastal Scheme: Preferred options consultation, Consultation report	https://southseacoastalscheme.org.uk/resources/summer-consultation-report/
Portsmouth Plan 2012	

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 Signed by: Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
 rejected by on

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 Signed by: Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson, The Leader of The City Council