

Report to: Executive
Date: 3 February 2009.
Report of: Executive Member for Liveability
Subject: Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2)
Ward: Coastal Wards

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 That the District of Easington approved and adopt the River Tyne to Flamborough Head Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) compiled by the North Eastern Coastal Authorities Group (NECAG) in consultation with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Defra.

2.0 Consultation

2.1 There has been an extensive public and stakeholder consultation exercise undertaken at each stage of the development process, facilitated by officers, the consultant Royal Haskoning and elected Members.

2.2 The review and development of the SMP has been underway since October 2004. A number of stages of consultation have been undertaken throughout the development process to ensure stakeholders views and local knowledge is incorporated into the Plan.

2.3 The initial round of 8 public stakeholders meetings across the region to identify any issues was held during December 2004. The second round of 8 public stakeholders meetings was held during April 2005 to agree these issues and establish objectives. At the third round of 8 public meetings, stakeholders were invited to scrutinise and comment on the draft SMP2. This was then followed by a 3-month public consultation period, where some stakeholders did raise concerns. These concerns have been addressed and where appropriate the draft SMP2 amended accordingly.

2.4 The consultation has taken various forms. Details of the draft strategy were sent to numerous agencies and interested parties. Presentations have been made to, Key Stakeholders, Members of the Public, Environment Agency representatives and Councils Members.

2.5 The fourth and final round of 8 public meetings was held in March to disseminate the SMP2. Stakeholders who previously made comments on the draft were shown how their comments affected the final draft. Amendments and changes to the draft were highlighted.

3.0 Background

3.1 A Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is a large scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal processes and seeks to reduce the risk to people and the developed, historic and natural environment.

3.2 The SMP2 forms an important part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) strategy for flood and coastal defence as set out in "Making Space for Water" (Defra 2005).

3.3 Whilst the SMP2 is a non-statutory policy document principally for coastal defence management planning, it does take account of other existing planning initiatives and legislative requirements, and is intended to inform wider strategic planning.

- 3.4 An extensive public consultation exercise has been undertaken, facilitated by officers, the Coastal Groups consultants Royal Haskoning and the Portfolio Holder for Environment.
- 3.5 The consultation has taken various forms. Details of the draft strategy were sent to numerous agencies and interested parties. Presentations have been made to Key Stakeholders, Environment Agency representatives and other Councils Members.
- 3.6 The Plan reflects upon any significant changes since the 1997 SMP and recommends a prioritised programme of Strategy Plan development or reviews; an outline of timing of possible future schemes; establishes any actions that will be required to resolve uncertainties; to establish any actions that may be necessary to deal with the consequences of the plan and suggests a process for informing stakeholders of progress against the actions.
- 3.7 The issues for Members consideration are the:
- **Content of the SMP2**
 - **Responsibilities of the District of Easington**
 - **Future management of the SMP2**

3.1.0 Content of the SMP2

- 3.1.1 The principle objective of the review is to reflect upon any changes in circumstances since the original SMP was drawn up in 1997 and to ensure the SMP2 takes into account new data and Defra guidelines.
- 3.1.2 Key to the success of the SMP2 will be the proposed Action Plan (Chapter 7 of the SMP2 document). This is not only influenced by the priorities including conditions of the beaches, sea walls and coastal slopes, but also takes account of coastal erosion, sea level rise and climate change.
- 3.1.3 The completed SMP2 has an ongoing implementation plan. This includes implementation of strategy plans, stand-alone schemes, monitoring and studies. The SMP2 Project Management Group will be responsible for undertaking ongoing strategic monitoring and strategic plans for relevant policy units. NECAG will continue its involvement in maintaining the SMP2 (updating databases with new reports or results). This will be facilitated through the SMP2 website.
- 3.1.4 It is proposed to hold an annual SMP2 progress meeting to which Members and Key Stakeholders from all NECAG partners will be invited. This meeting will allow Members and Key Stakeholders to receive updates on proposed schemes and studies as well as other matters of mutual interest regarding coastal defence and coastal processes.
- 3.1.5 The recommendations in the SMP2 document for the Easington section of coast are to 'Hold the line' at Seaham. This is to undertake any necessary new works or improvements to existing defences to ensure that there is no further erosion that may compromise existing infrastructure, new developments or any future proposals.
- 3.1.6 The remainder of the coastline from south of Seaham Harbour to the district boundary with Hartlepool has been identified as 'No active intervention'; this is to allow the continuation of the natural processes and allow erosion to continue.

3.2.0 Responsibilities of the District of Easington.

- 3.2.1 District of Easington officers have been actively involved in the review process. Officers have ensured that the outcomes are synergistic with the existing Shoreline Management Plan (1997), with the evolving Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) and with the Local Development Framework.
- 3.2.2 The SMP2 is to be adopted by the seven local authority partners, the Environment Agency, Natural England and agreed by Defra. The SMP2 is a policy document and underlines the authorities commitment to monitor and review the evolution of the coast.
- 3.2.3 Once adopted the plan will be physically signed off by each of the authorities. It is suggested that the signatories should be the relevant Portfolio Holders for each of the seven partner authorities, and senior representatives of other partners such as Natural England, Environment Agency, North York's Moors National Parks Authority, and English Heritage.
- 3.2.4 The SMP2 will then be the document by which the Council will pursue its coastal management in the future and via which decisions upon developments and initiatives will be founded.

3.3.0 Future Management of the SMP2

- 3.3.1 Future Management will involve implementation of the Action Plan, strategy plans, schemes, monitoring and studies. The SMP2 Project Management Group will be responsible for undertaking ongoing strategic monitoring and strategy plans for policy units within their areas of responsibility. Bi annual periodic reviews will be undertaken to monitor progress of the SMP2 Action Plan.
- 3.3.2 Future formal reviews of the SMP will take place at appropriate intervals, however it will not be appropriate to undertake a review of the SMP2 unless there has been a significant change in local conditions or sufficient monitoring or study data has been collected to resolve particular uncertainties.
- 3.3.3 NECAG will continue its active involvement with the SMP2.
- 3.3.4 The SMP2 is a "living" document that will be actively maintained between reviews (updating the SMP2 database with new reports, studies and data). It will be disseminated using the SMP2 website.

4.0 Position Statement and Option Appraisal

- 4.1 The authority adopted the SMP 1st edition circa 1997, and following guidance from DEFRA the document has been reviewed on the 10th year.
- 4.2 The review has been carried out as described in section 3 of this report and the SMP2 document has now been completed.
- 4.3 The SMP 1st edition was created as a standalone document and was only concerned with the coastal processes associated with the District of Easington, and therefore ignored what was happening to the north and south of our boundary.
- 4.4 The SMP2 has been created in partnership with the other members of the NECAG group, and takes a more holistic look at the coastal processes from Tynemouth to Flamborough Head. It is envisaged that the new incarnation of the SMP reflects a more complete

picture of what is happening along our coastline, and therefore the coastal authorities can make more informed decisions on issues concerning our coastline.

4.5 The options available are;

- to remain with the old out of date SMP document,
- or more forward and adopt the more recent SMP2 document.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial

There are no financial implications

5.2 Legal

The SMP2 is being undertaken using the Council's permissive powers under the Coast Protection Act 1949.

5.3 Policy

The SMP2 of the District of Easington is in line with current plans and policies.

5.4 LGR

It was intended to wait for post vesting day and put the SMP2 to the new authority for adoption, but due to a recent application to the Environment for funding for investigation works at Seaham Seawall and Seaham North Pier, it was decided to bring forward the adoption process to aid the grant application.

5.5 Risk

A risk assessment has been carried out and should the Council not adopt the SMP2 it would be at risk of: -

- maintaining current coastal policies as adopted in SMP1, which are based on historical not current data and information,
- jeopardising future Defra 100% grant on recommended coastal schemes, works and monitoring,
- dissatisfaction resulting from a failure to deliver expectations raised during the extensive stakeholder engagement.

Existing policies not being robust or sustainable in the long term in line with Defra objectives and guidance.

5.6 Communications

There are no issues regarding communications related to this report

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 Corporate Plan and Priorities

There are no implications relating to Corporate Plan and Priorities

6.2 Equality and Diversity

There are no implications relating to Equality and Diversity

6.3 E-Government

There are no implications relating to E-Government

6.4 Procurement

There are no implications relating to procurement

7.0 Recommendations

That the River Tyne to Flamborough Head Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) compiled by the North Eastern Coastal Authorities Group (NECAG) in consultation with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Defra be approved and adopted by the District of Easington.

7.1 Reason for recommendation:

The SMP2 is a comprehensive review of the policies contained in the current SMP1, it revisits the manner in which the original policies were derived and confirms or otherwise their robustness.

It has been necessary to update the original SMP to accommodate new guidance including consideration beyond the current 50 year horizon to a 100 year horizon.

To take into account contemporary strategies and studies, monitoring data and government guidelines on climate change and sea level rise.

Background Papers/Documents referred to

None