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Minutes of the Strategic Planning and Environment Policy Development and Review Panel

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Minutes of a meeting held on 14 May 2013
in the Collingwood Room, Civic Offices, Fareham

PRESENT:

Councillor J V Bryant
(Chairman)

Councillor T J Howard
(Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: J S Forrest, Miss T G Harper, A Mandry, N J Walker and P W Whittle, JP

Also

Present:

Councillors : K D Evans, Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Environment, T G Knight, Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee (minute7), R H Price, JP (minute 6) and Mrs K K Trott (minutes 6 and 7)



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence made at this meeting.

2. MINUTES

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Planning & Environment Policy Development and Review Panel held on 5 March 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Councillor Mandry made reference to minute 7, and asked if members would be provided with details of the Executive work programme items for 2013/14 which fall under the Strategic Planning & Environment Portfolio as stated. The Director of Planning and Environment advised that the Executive work programme document is continually being updated. Arrangements would be made to circulate a copy of the latest version of the document as soon as possible to all Panel members by e-mail, and that an Executive work programme would also be appended to the Panel's work programme report to the next Panel meeting.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Whittle back as a member of the Panel.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. PRESENTATION - RIVER HAMBLE TO PORTCHESTER COASTAL FLOOD AND EROSION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Panel received a presentation on progress regarding the River Hamble to Portchester Coastal Flood and Erosion Management Strategy from Gavin Holder, Coastal Engineer and Project Officer, Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership. Information was also given regarding the Contaminated Land Project.

The presentation provided information about the strategy process and funding. It was noted that up to May 2013 £157,000 had been spent on finalising the scoping phase with a remaining budget of £387,000 for Strategy Development. Members were informed of the progress which had been made since the strategy had been considered at the Panel meeting in July 2012. This included:-

- Completion of the scoping phase (in April 2013)
- Brief for development stage confirmed
- Preferred consultants recommended.

The key messages from the scoping phase were:-

- There is plenty of good information already available to guide the Strategy;
- Contaminated land investigations around Portsmouth Harbour have been completed;
- There is a developing knowledge of coastal processes due to tracer study work;
- There is a need to confirm coastal defence asset owners and maintainers;
- Strategy modelling techniques have been confirmed, utilising detailed cross section data provided by the Coastal Partnership;
- Confirmation of need for Water Framework Directive works by Statutory Consultees;
- The need to implement the stakeholder engagement plan;
- There is a need for targeted investigation of broader outcomes and contribution opportunities, to reflect funding Policy changes.

Members were informed that the strategy development phase was expected to take up until to July 2014, following which adoption approval would be sought from Gosport Borough Council and Fareham Borough Council prior to approval by the Environment Agency/Defra by the end of 2014. Key stakeholder and community consultation events are planned for August 2013 and March 2014. Members asked that community consultation avoids holiday periods.

Mr Holder gave details of the contaminated land project sites and advised that the aim of the project was to improve understanding of what is known in relation to the coastal landfill sites and how they could be affecting the harbour. This in turn would inform the preferred coastal management options. He explained that this was a partnership project between Fareham Borough Council, Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership, Natural England and the Environment Agency. Site investigations had been carried out in the identified sample locations and a factual report completed to share with project partners. Initial analysis shows that there is no immediate cause for concern. It was also reported that new guidance on the management of landfill sites and land contamination on eroding or low-lying coastlines had just been issued.

The Chairman invited questions from members of the Panel and from other members attending the meeting. In response to the Chairman's invitation, Councillor Price and Councillor Mrs Trott took part in the discussion on this matter.

It was AGREED that Gavin Holder be thanked for his very informative and comprehensive presentation.

7. PRESENTATION - EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF WALLINGTON FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEME

The Panel received a presentation from Scott Mills from the Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership, concerning an evaluation of the performance of the Wallington Property Level Flood Protection Scheme (PLP).

The presentation included a number of images of the serious flooding event in Wallington which had occurred on 20 December 2012. Members were reminded that the (PLP) scheme had been completed in March 2011 and involved 49 houses fitted with flood prevention products such as window and door guards. It was noted that there had been a very good response from both the emergency services and the community and that the PLP scheme had successfully been deployed and tested in this flooding situation.

In consideration of the sources of the flooding, reference was made to the cracks in the Environment Agency flood wall. It was reported that the Environment Agency had addressed this issue and would be undertaking the rebuilding of the worst elements where cracks had been found and also carrying out structural inspections as part of an asset management regime. Additionally, the Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership were in liaison with the Environment Agency to look at improvements to the structure as well as gaining better understanding of tidal and fluvial flood risks in the area.

The Chairman requested officers to write to the Environment Agency for written confirmation/assurance that the asset management programme would include regular inspections of the condition of Wallington flood wall. It was intended that this could then be reported back to the Panel.

Questions/comments were invited from members of the Panel. Councillor Knight and Councillor Mrs Trott also took part in the discussion at the Chairman's invitation.

It was AGREED that:-

- (a) Scott Mills be thanked for his very interesting presentation;
- (b) Members' congratulations and thanks to officers for their efforts in dealing with the Wallington flood event and the success of the flood prevention scheme be recorded; and
- (c) A letter be sent to the Environment Agency requesting written confirmation that the asset management regime would include regular inspections of the condition of Wallington flood wall and that the reply from the Agency be reported back to the Panel.

**8. STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT
AND REVIEW PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14 - INITIAL
ENDORSEMENT**

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Planning and Environment which reviewed the Panel's work programme for 2013/14. Members were invited to suggest items they wish to be added to the work programme for future meetings.

Councillor Forrest suggested rail providers be invited to attend a future Panel meeting to discuss the future of rail services in the Borough. He was asked to submit proposed questions to the Chairman and Director of Planning and Environment which could potentially inform the preparation of a scoping report which could then be presented to either the Scrutiny Board or the Panel as appropriate.

Similarly, Councillor Whittle suggested that representatives from Hampshire County Council be invited to a meeting to provide information about how their activities impact on the services provided by the Council within the Strategic Planning and Environment portfolio. . The Director of Planning and Environment proposed that he arrange to discuss and explore this proposal in greater detail with Councillor Whittle.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Harper regarding the pre-meeting member site visit to Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area, it was stated that this would most likely take place in the week preceding 16 July 2013, however members would be notified as soon as arrangements had been finalised.

It was AGREED that:-

- (a) the draft programme of items for 2013/14 as set out in Appendix A attached to the report be noted ; and
- (b) progress on actions since the last Panel meeting, as set out in Appendix B attached to the report be noted.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.35 pm).