

Minutes of a Meeting of the **COASTAL CHANGE & BEACH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
held at the Town Hall, Swanage, on **WEDNESDAY**
13th NOVEMBER 2024 at 2.15 p.m.

In Attendance: Councillor M Bonfield – Chairman

Councillor J Dorrington – Swanage Town Council
Councillor D Monkhouse – Swanage Town Council
Councillor C Sutton – Swanage Town Council
Councillor C Tomes – Swanage Town Council
Mr I Brown – Swanage Coast Guard
Mr A Charters – Swanage Sea Rowing Club
Mr B Compton – Ocean Bay
Mr R Eatwell – North Beach representative
Mr A Espana – FCERM Team, Dorset Council
Mr E Fox – RNLI
Mr S Hill – Swanage Boat Hire
Mr P Palmer – Pierhead Watersports
Mr H Potter – Swanage Pier Trust
Ms E Steenkamp – FCERM Team, Dorset Council
Ms R Tanner – Land & Wave
Mr M Turnbull – Swanage Coastal Change Forum
Mr C Wiggins – Beach Concessions
Mr D Williams – Dorset Coast Forum
Mr M Winter – RNLI

Also Present: Dr M Ayres – Town Clerk
Mrs S Layton-Kelly – Administration Officer
Mr C Milmer – Visitor Services & Business Development Manager

There were two members of the public and one member of the local press present at the meeting.

Public Participation Time

The following matter was raised during Public Participation Time:-

- A concern was raised regarding pedestrian safety along Seymer Road. Specifically, it was highlighted that the pavement on the west side is very old and extremely narrow in places, while on the east side, there is no pavement at all. The member of the public enquired about a plan to safeguard the pavement between the East Bar and Encombe Road. In response, it was noted that the Local Highways Officer is aware and further discussion will be held to ascertain if this is still part of the flood defence plan.

1) Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Mr A Frampton (South west Flood and Coastal), Ms S Parker (Dorset Coast Forum), Mr G Richardson (Water Safety Officer RNLI), Mr K Sheppard (RNLI Lead Lifeguard Supervisor), Mr C Maltby (RNLI), Ms E Wright (National Trust Studland), Ms J

Lane (Cumulus), Mr T Greasty (Swanage Sea Fishing), Ms A Williams (Wessex Water), Mr D Picksley (Environment Agency), Mr R Marsh (Marsh Boats), Ms B Betts (Dorset Council).

2) To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Beach Management Advisory Committee held on 10th July 2024

Proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Mr M Turnball and AGREED:-

That the Minutes of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee Meeting held on 10th July 2024 be approved as a correct record.

3) Dorset Council's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Team

Further to Minute No. 4) of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee meeting held on 10th July 2024, an update was provided by the FCERM team which included the following:

a) Swanage Town Centre Coastal Protection Scheme

The project Team provided an update, noting that, over recent months, they have been refining the preferred option of flood defences consisting of a series of seawalls that are sympathetic to the surrounding environment. This process has been carried out with careful consideration of the area's conservation status.

It was further noted that a public engagement event had been planned to promote the proposed solution. However, due to a series of delays, the public event has been postponed to a date yet to be confirmed.

b) Beach Renourishment scheme

The team reported that they are continuing to develop the design for the Beach recharge project and continue collaborating with contractors and BCP Council to ensure a full understanding of costs.

They confirmed that the Bathymetric survey has concluded and that the nesting areas of the Black Seabream have been identified. They will continue to liaise with Natural England to seek guidance on appropriate next steps. However, a series of grab samples from Swanage seabed have been proposed.

c) Swanage Beach Condition

It was reported that there hasn't been any significant weather events so far this autumn. This has aided in maintaining healthier beach levels.

d) North Beach Cliff Management Strategy

The team advised that the first round of LiDAR surveys and monitoring conducted earlier in the year, has now concluded and reports have been issued detailing the geological strata along with associated issues and risks. The assessment determined that there are no properties currently at imminent risk..

The next round of inspections and monitoring are due to commence in March 2025. The annual data collected will be analysed to inform our understanding of how cliffs evolve on a yearly basis.

e) Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP) project

It was advised that the Outline Business Case (OBC) had been submitted to the EA and that the outcome is due to be announced soon. The team expressed optimism on the outcome and if positive, a submission would be made to Dorset Council's cabinet on the 17th December.

A discussion ensued, where points including the seafront wave barriers at the boat launch and the road closure at the end of Lower High Street were discussed. It was noted that seafront wave barriers would be removed by Easter, and that there is an ongoing review of the clean-up response, concerning Lower High Street.

Thanks were given to the FCERM Team for their support on this matter.

4) **Wessex Water online coast and rivers watch map – update**

A representative from Wessex Water was unable to attend the meeting however, the Chairman shared the following update that had been provided by Abi Williams, River Recreation Liaison Officer, from Wessex Water. The key elements were:

- **Coast and Rivers Watch** – the national system that will take all 10 Water and Sewage Companies (WASC's) data to show on a single web map is almost live. Defra is just in the process of ironing out last-minute problems. For information see – [Coast and rivers watch | Wessex Water](#)
- **Bathing Water projects** – AI real time Water Quality monitoring technology installed at 3 locations this year i.e. Poole Park Lake, Farleigh Hungerford (nr Bath) and Fordingbridge – starting to train the AI for these sites.
Currently working on a prioritisation tool to help screen future sites for AMP 8 i.e. approx. 20 sites to be identified and have AI technology installed by April 2027.

A further discussion took place in which various questions were raised for Wessex Water to address. The Chairman invited those present to submit any additional questions to the Town Council Administration Officer via email so that they can be forwarded to Wessex Water for their response. The Chairman agreed that Wessex Water would be invited to attend the next meeting and give an update which would be beneficial for new councillors.

5) **Motion for the Ocean Draft Declaration-Update**

An update was provided on the four key areas of focus for the Motion for the Ocean Action Plan currently being delivered by the Environmental Policy and Action Plan Working Party.

- **Reduction of Sewage Discharges-** The working party is collaborating with Wessex Water and the Environment Agency to look at ways to reduce the discharges from the combined sewer overflow (CSO) on the bathing beach.
- **Maritime Bio Audit and Citizen Science Project-** Plans are underway to procure a maritime bio audit and explore the potential for a citizen science project. This project will involve mapping the flora and fauna in Swanage and Durlston Bay.
- **Public Information Signs-** Following the completion of the bay mapping project, the working party will consider the installation of public information signs to highlight the diverse marine life in Swanage and Durlston Bays.
- **Marine Life Media Platform-** The working party is investigating the development of a website and social media platform where divers and boat users can upload videos and photographs of marine life in Swanage.

6) **Stakeholder Consultation Wessex Marine Team, Wessex Area Team, Natural England- Marine Protected Areas- New and updated Marine Conservation Advice packages; September 2024-Invitation to comment-further discussions at Planning and Briefing Consultation Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2024.**

Further to Minute No. 5) of the Planning and Consultation Committee meeting held on 7th October 2024, committee members were reminded to review the consultation documents and submit any feedback on the proposals for consideration at the Planning and Consultation meeting scheduled for 2nd December 2024.

7) **Update from The Visitor Services and Business Development Manager (VSBDM)**

The VSBDM provided an update which included:

- **Blue Flag** - The Council had been advised by the assessor that the 2024 submission was one of the best they had ever seen.
- **Seaweed and raking trial** – The trial was undertaken during the 2024 season to push seaweed back out to sea. It would appear that this had been very successful.
- **Shore Place (Hardstanding)** -It is anticipated that the Sauna will arrive at Shore Place at the beginning of December.
- **Accessible Mats** – There are two accessible mats now available to provide improved access to the beach from the beginning of the season.
- **New Notice Board Outside TIC** – The Environment and Green Space Committee had agreed that a new notice board will be erected outside the TIC which will include an update on water quality.
- **Fishers' Huts Working Party** – Further discussions with Fishers' huts occupants are scheduled for January 2025.

8) **Updates from representatives/organisations**

- **Marsh Boats** – The Chairman read an email received from Marsh's Boats, Stone Quay representative, drawing attention to a suggestion received from a member of the public that there was a need for signage on the quay to warn bathers of boats coming alongside.
- **Environment Advice Team Manager, Dorset Council (EATM)**– The chairman read an email received from the Environment Advice Team Manager, Dorset Council, regarding the potential amendment to the Purbeck Pleasure Boat Byelaw 2013.
It was noted that changes were being put forward for Studland Bay and that this provided an opportunity for Swanage to recommend any changes given the increase in swimmers over recent years, and that feedback from the committee at this stage would be beneficial to ensure that their input could be considered in the byelaw review.
Specific points mentioned were, current placement of buoys and the timing of buoys going in/coming out.
It was further noted that, should the proposal progress, a public consultation will be conducted. However, obtaining initial feedback from the Committee was deemed prudent.
A discussion ensued where the possibility of a dedicated boat channel was raised along with concerns expressed around the safety implications of people using the 5 knot area as an unofficial mooring zone. It was further noted that as jet skis are being redirected from Mowlem Beach to Stone Quay, prompting the suggestion that the EATM could review and suggest an appropriate area for jet skis.
It was noted that two representatives of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee, Mr C Milmer and Mr P. Palmer, would attend the next meeting of the Personal Watercraft Partnership Group in December to input the suggestions raised at this meeting.
- **Swanage Boat Hire** – The representative noted that he has a fast safety boat and is happy to assist the lifeguards if ever needed.
Thanks were given for the provision of a rubbish bin for boats accessing the bay. It is proving to be successful.
- **Beach Concessions** - The representative gave thanks to the Town Council and the volunteers who keep the beaches clean.

- **RNLI** – The representative provided an overview of the season. It was reported that two lifeguards operated daily from the May half term until the start of the summer holidays after which this increased to three lifeguards per day during the holiday period. Provisional stats indicated that lifeguards responded to 54 incidents, providing assistance to 77 people covering a range of incidents from rescues to locating missing/found people. Additionally, over 9000 preventative actions were carried out. The Beach Lifeguard Unit (Tower) was noted to be working well in its central position relative to the swim zone and this will continue to be reviewed. As part of the planning for 2025, the representative highlighted that further lifeguard courses would be taking place between the 16th and 21st of December 2024 and a taster session for potential participants to meet the team was planned for the 23rd November 2024 at the RNLI College. Contact details were given for those interested. The Chairman gave thanks to the RNLI Lifeguard Team.
- A representative from **Pierhead Water Sports** raised a query regarding the possibility of the Council producing a formal protocol for clearing debris in light of the yacht incident that occurred earlier in the year. In response, the representative from Swanage Coastguard advised that Dorset Council is in process of addressing this issue.
- **Ocean Bay** – The representative raised concerns regarding incidents involving dogs at Ocean Bay earlier in the year and requested that a sign be erected to advise that dogs must be kept on leads. The VSBDM acknowledged an increase of complaints regarding dogs on the beach this year and agreed to discuss this issue.
- **North Beach Representative** – The representative acknowledged the recently erected steps at Sheps Hollow and congratulated Dorset Council on their successful installation. The representative further noted that dog owners had raised concerns regarding the metal steps but has had it confirmed that Green Spaces are looking to add capping to the steps.
- **Swanage Sea Rowing Club** – The representative from the Rowing Club reported that the club has had a great year and now boasts a membership of 150. The club will continue to host national competitions throughout 2025, with one already scheduled for 7th- 8th June. The representative went on to give thanks to the VSBDM and his team for their support.

9) **Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas**

There were no items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas.

10) **Date of next meeting**

The date of next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 12th February 2025 at 2.15 p.m. at the Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 4.15 p.m.