

**A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT BOARD  
WAS HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2024**

Councillors Chegwyn, Mrs Huggins, Westerby, Johnston, Maynard, Mrs Morgan, Marshall and Philpott

**22. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE**

There were none

**23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Huggins declared a non pecuniary interest in item 6 as Chair of GMAT for St. Vincent College

**24. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2024**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2024 were signed as a true and correct record.

The Chair advised that Coastal Partners would be giving a verbal update on the Stokes Bay scheme under Any Other Items

**25. DEPUTATIONS- STANDING ORDER 3.4**

There were none

**26. PUBLIC QUESTIONS- STANDING ORDER 3.5**

There were none

**27. CONSTRUCTION OF FLOOD DEFENCE STRUCTURES AT FORTON**

Consideration was given to a report by the Chief Executive updating members on progress with the Forton Coastal Defence scheme since the update in June 2023.

Officers advised that the project would now move to the next stage as the project is fully funded, an experienced contractor has been appointed, and the badger risk mitigated. Stakeholder communication in the form of letters, website updates and social media posts will commence in March. There will also be ongoing engagement with local educational establishments as part of the conditions of the award.

Members were advised that approximately 700 letters would be sent to homes and businesses, and they would get to see what is being shared before it is published.

Officers advised that everything possible would be done to protect the badgers, and a licensed badger specialist has been providing advice and assistance. There has been a

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change in alignment of the works, which removes a potential clash with the sett. An exclusion zone is to be established within which restrictions on vibration etc will be in place. The timing of the project avoids the badger breeding season, overwintering bird season and minimises disruption to other bird and marine life. There will be supervision by environmental specialists monitoring the works and audits to check agreed controls are in place. In answer to a Members suggestion of involving the local badger specialist, officers advised that they had been consulted early on in the planning of the project.

In answer to a Members question, officers advise that leaseholder communications would initially be issued through St. Vincents if all parties were happy with that arrangement.

Members welcomed the news that the project was due to begin as it had been in the planning stages for some years, and any delay would be detrimental to at risk homeowners and businesses in the area, and also visitors.

Members wished to thank Coastal Partners Officers for all their hard work in getting the project to this point and wished them success in delivering the scheme.

RESOLVED: That the Board noted:

- The works procurement is completed, and a contractor has been appointed
- The project is fully funded
- Planning permission for the scheme has been obtained
- The project is programmed and on target for an April 2024 start date on site, with planned completion in November 2024
- Public communications about the scheme works will be issued before construction.

## **28. ANY OTHER ITEMS**

The Chair asked the officers of Coastal Partners to give members a brief update on some of the other local flood schemes.

Alverstoke - Members were advised that there had been no change to the status of this scheme as the issues of the cables remains unsolved. There is still a budget shortfall and updates on any opportunities from Environmental Agency are still awaited.

In answer to a Members question Officers were able to advise that by pausing the project, around £200,000 of budget has been protected. A Member advised that the council could not afford to pay the previous funding gap (c.£800,000), new funding would have to be supplied by government to meet the future budget shortfall.

Seafield - Officers advised that this scheme was also on hold whilst the project budgets are updated and opportunities are explored to close the expected funding gap and develop a forward plan.

Stokes Bay Road Seawall Replacement - Officers advised that this scheme covered a 135m section of failed seawall, which is receiving regular monitoring. The contract is out to tender with responses expected shortly. Once assessed, we will know if the current funding will be sufficient. Planning permission has been secured.

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Officers were still not in possession of the Marine License, which is now overdue. They had pressed the Marine Management Organisation and restated the urgency of these works. Receipt of the license is critical before works can start and they are continuing to push for a resolution.

Members were advised that the east car park would be used as a site compound, and the area would be left in a better condition than currently. It is probable that this car park would be out of action over the tourist season. An update on the current issue of surface water flooding in both car parks needs to be provided by other Council officers.

In answer to a Members question, Officers explained that in regard to the funding from Southern Regional Flood & Coast Committee, they were not aware that there was a mechanism where money could be taken back and felt that they were strongly committed to the project, but any underspend may be returned.

Officers explained that the seawall had recently sustained some damage which was being held at bay by some temporary repair works to see this through till the works can start in the summer.

Members asked to be kept informed as to the issue of the Marine Licence.

**CHAIRMAN**

Concluded at 6.33 pm

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