

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	River Hamble Harbour Board
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Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Rural Affairs

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1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of issues relevant to the environment management of the Harbour since November 2009.

2. Issues

2.1. Oil Spill Contingency Plan

Under the requirements of the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution Preparedness Response and Co-Operation Convention) Regulations 1998 the annual return has been submitted to MCA detailing incidents, exercises, training and updates to the Oil Spill Contingency Plan.

Oil Spill Response Limited held an oil spill exercise in the River Hamble on 4 November 2009. Whilst this was a training exercise for OSRL's own staff, the RHHA took the opportunity to shadow the exercise and also invited our new Tier 2 Contractor, Adler & Allan, to observe.

In line with the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution Preparedness, response & co-ordination) Regulations 1998, the next formal 3-yearly oil pollution training exercise will be held in Autumn 2010.

2.2. Update on M27 situation

The Chairman of the Harbour Board has written to the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency expressing his concerns about the pollution risk posed by the M27 bridge. A response is attached at Appendix A.

2.3. Streamlined Consents meeting

Four potential projects were presented to the Hamble River Streamlined Consent Group on 9 February for pre-application advice on the consents process, design ideas, constraints and opportunities. The new Area Consent Manager from the shadow Marine Management Organisation in Newcastle (currently the Marine & Fisheries Agency) also attended. This group, chaired by the AHM(E), is held up as an example of national best practice by the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs. It offers applicants who are in the early stages of considering proposals within the marine environment an opportunity to meet informally with all the authorities who consent the numerous permissions required for such work. The authorities explain the marine consents required and offer applicants advice and set out the process for how to proceed. This group is purely advisory, no decisions are made or approvals given. Meetings are usually bi-annual, in response to demand.

2.4. Dredging

Maintenance dredging consents were granted for Hamble Point Marina and Port Hamble. The dredging at Hamble Point has now been completed.

The consented capital dredge at Warsash Maritime College was undertaken in February.

Negotiations with ABP regarding their proposed capital dredge of the Southampton Approach Channel are ongoing to ensure that any impacts on the River Hamble are fully assessed and mitigated.

2.5. Solent European Marine Site (SEMS) Management Scheme review

The Harbour Authority is a Relevant and Competent Authority¹ under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 and as such has duties to ensure the protection of the Solent European Marine Sites and to establish a management scheme for the European Site. The AHM(E) represents RHHA on the SEMS Management group.

The SEMS Management Scheme outlines a framework for the effective management of the SEMS so the conservation objectives are met, and it aims to guide the exercise of the Relevant Authorities' functions so they ensure compliance with the Habitat Regulations.

The SEMS Management group agreed on the proposal set out for the review of the Management Scheme (required by DEFRA every 5 years). At the meeting, Natural England gave a presentation setting out initial findings on their assessment of the condition of each sub-feature of the Special Area of Conservation (the Special Protection Area assessment will be done this year). These results will be taken into account for the Scheme review.

¹ Competent Authority - any statutory body or public office exercising legislative powers, whether on land or sea.
Relevant Authority - a competent authority which has powers or functions which have, or could have, an impact on the marine area within or adjacent to a European marine site.

2.6. North Solent Shoreline Management Plan

The draft North Solent Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), commissioned by DEFRA and produced by lead partner New Forest District Council, has just been released for public comment until the 23 April. The draft SMP, exhibition materials and feedback forms are available to view at <http://www.northsolentsmp.co.uk> and at the local authority offices. It aims to balance the management of coastal flooding and erosion risks, with natural processes, and the consequences of climate change for the next 20, 50 and 100 years. The plan covers 61 policy units between Selsey Bill and Hurst Spit, and 6 of these units are within the Hamble Estuary, extracted below.

The SMP recommends one of four policies for each unit:

- Hold the line (HLT)- maintain or upgrade the level of protection provided by existing defences
- Advance the Line (ATL) - build new defences seaward of existing defences
- Managed Realignment (MR) - allow retreat of the shoreline with management to control or limit movement. This may be followed by Hold the Realigned Line – MR (HTRL)
- No Active Intervention (NAI) - not to invest in providing or maintaining defences

Policy Unit	Start	End	Epoch 1 0-20 yrs	Epoch 2 20-50 yrs	Epoch 3 50-100 yrs
5C01	Hook Park	Warsash North	NAI	MR	MR (HTRL)
5C02	Warsash North	Swanwick Shore Road	NAI	NAI	NAI
5C03	Swanwick Shore Road	Bursledon Bridge	HTL	HTL	NAI
5C04	Bursledon Bridge to Botley & Curdridge to Satchell Marshes		NAI	NAI	NAI
5C05	Satchell Marshes	Hamble Common Point	NAI* (localised HTL for Rope Walk and the Quay)	NAI* (localised HTL for Rope Walk and the Quay)	NAI* (localised HTL for Rope Walk and the Quay)
5C06	Hamble Common Point	Hamble Oil Terminal	NAI	NAI	NAI

** To be determined through more detailed studies*

The RHHA will consider any impacts of policy proposals on exercising our functions and will respond accordingly to the consultation.

2.7. Solent Forum Nature Conservation Group

AHM(E) attended this meeting in February. The AHM(E) represents RHHA on this group, comprised of various harbour authorities, environmental authorities, local authorities and nature conservation groups. The aim of the group is to co-ordinate implementation of cross-cutting nature conservation actions stemming from the many statutory and non-statutory documents.

2.8. Chichester Harbour Visit

The AHM(E) was invited to join the HCC Countryside Service day hosted by Chichester Harbour Conservancy to visit coastal sites at various stages of managed realignment around Chichester Harbour. This was a valuable opportunity to network with internal colleagues who can advise RHHA, and to discuss approaches taken by Chichester Harbour Conservancy regarding consents, dredging, environmental management and other common duties.

2.9. Hamble Estuary Partnership (HEP) update

The AHM(E) provides the officer duties for this partnership and facilitates delivery of the Estuary Management Plan. New members were welcomed to a meeting of the HEP in November. The new format of the HEP was agreed, along with the arrangements for a new website. Organisational updates were given by all members. Discussion of future key projects that the Partnership can facilitate the delivery of will be held at the next meeting in early summer 2010. The HEP Chairman has unfettered access to the Harbour Board so that the various views of the HEP members can be made known.

2.10. Briefing to Management Committee

The AHM(E) gave a briefing to the Management Committee in March on the environmental responsibilities and duties of the Harbour Authority.

3. Recommendation

3.1. It is recommended that this report be noted.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	no
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None