Agenda item: 8

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee	River Hamble Harbour Management Committee
Date:	9 December 2016
Title:	Environmental Update
Reference:	7899
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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1. Summary

1.1. This report summarises activities relating to the River Hamble Harbour Authority's (RHHA) environmental management of the Hamble Estuary from June 2016 to mid November 2016. .

2. Updates

2.1. The Harbour Authority has renewed the contract for provision of a Tier 2 marine counter pollution response service with its existing contractor, Adler & Allen Limited (A&A), for a further 3 years.

2.2. On 13 October staff from RHHA and A&A undertook the 3-yearly oil boom deployment and table-top exercise as required by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (also present as an observer). The scenario was based on fictitious slicks of crude oil entering the River entrance from Southampton Water. The exercise tested the following: emergency response procedures; RHHA's Oil Spill Contingency Plan; the RHHA's incident Management structure; the procedures / cooperation between the RHHA, Adler and Allan Ltd and other external parties; the capabilities, response times and deployment/towing skills of Tier 1 and Tier 2 responders from both organisations.

2.3. The Environment & Development Manager (EDM), Harbour Master (HM) and Deputy HM attended a site visit to view the finished slipway at Brooklands Quay. It was agreed that some final minor improvements would be made to the mitigation area. It was further agreed that an appropriate aid to navigation, approved by Trinity House, would mark the furthest extent of the slipway.

2.4. A minor variation to the Harbour Works Consent (granted 8 April 2016) for the extension to the Harbour Master's jetty at Warsash has been approved by the Harbour Board. The variation relates to a minor alteration to the location of piles. Two of the piles will be relocated by 1 meter from that original drawn to improve stability. The requirement to relocate a 3rd pile originally shown will no longer be necessary. The 'shaped infill' section of pontoon where the two jetties will now meet was also provided in detail. RHHA has received approval for this minor

change from all other consenting authorities (MMO, EA, FBC) who view this change as an immaterial difference as the structure, design, methodology are all the same, and they have recorded the new plan on record. Revised plan at Appendix 1 - Walcon Plan ref M0637-480 Rev E.

2.5. The EDM provided a response to Natural England's (NE) consultation on its draft advice package for the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation. This included information relating to the designated features of the site, objectives for management, and provides the information used by regulators and developers to inform Habitats Regulations Assessments. NE have confirmed that the feedback is being used to help improve the final advice, including the RHHA's request that it be included within the list of other authorities that regulate activities, have byelaws or provide advice within the Solent Maritime SAC.

2.6. The RHHA submitted its response to the Solent European Marine Sites (SEMS) Annual Monitoring Survey. The Solent Forum then collated responses from all relevant authorities and submitted the resulting Annual Monitoring Report to the SEMS Strategic Stakeholder Group. This report then guided population of the SEMS delivery plan at the annual meeting of the SEMS Management Group, attended by the EDM and Marine Director on 21 September. This annual process ensures that relevant authorities such at RHHA are fulfilling duties with regards to monitoring and managing the impacts that activities (as opposed to plans or developments) have on the protected SEMS.

2.7. Bait digging activity has appeared to have increased in recent months, in particular by 'gangs' of up to 12 diggers. The RHHA enforces a byelaw relating to digging at safe distances from structure and moorings and has also undertaken joint operations with the police. RHHA staff, with the support local stakeholders, continue to log and report activity to the Southern Inshore Fisheries' & Conservation Authority to assist with the evidence base required to inform any future management decisions. This is an example of an activity which has little regulation yet has the potential to impact the SMES sites, and so the EDM highlighted this at the recent SEMS meeting (see 2.6) to ensure it is captured within the work SEMS Management Group.

2.8. Following endorsement by the project Steering Group of the River Hamble sediment management and habitat restoration study, AHTI Ltd Consultants have submitted the final report to RHHA. The EDM circulated the report widely during the autumn to promote the work and to gain initial feedback. The EDM and Marine Director attended a meeting of the Hamble River Boat Yard & Marina Operators Association to explain the study in more detail. The study has been well received. A separate paper on this study is provided in an adjacent report.

2.9. The EDM has been invited to represent RHHA on the Steering Group of the Solent Forum's new project 'Beneficial Use of Dredging in the Solent' (BUDS). This work has the potential to both compliment and build on that which RHHA has recently been undertaking through its sediment management and habitat restoration study.

2.10. The Marine Director and EDM attended a national habitat creation conference "Using Dredge Materials and Other 'Wastes' to Benefit Our Coasts". The programme looked at the drivers and constraints as well as showcasing some implemented projects and their related benefits. Solent region organisations were very well represented, highlighting the level of interest in realising schemes in this area. A key message was the need for regulators to provide clearer

leadership and co-ordination on this topic and its related challenges to enable more progress beyond the talking/study stage and before opportunities are lost.

2.11. The EDM was invited to provide a harbour's perspective at a workshop of Natural England's marine lead advisors from around England's coast currently looking at biosecurity planning. The EDM highlighted the practical obstacles for river users to managing invasive species in the coastal environment. Natural England's national ports & harbours' specialist was also present (also a member of RHHA Harbour Board).

2.12. The EDM hosted a visit from officers of the Solent Forum. The team were taken on the water to highlight the wide range of issues and activities that take place on the River and how they are managed by RHHA.

2.13. RHHA received notification from Historic England that the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has amended the entry for GRACE DIEU and the possible site of Henry V's warship the HOLIGOST on the list of protected wreck sites, located in the Upper Hamble estuary. The Statutory Instrument for this decision is number SI 2016 No. 685 and came into effect on 21st July 2016. The Harbour Master is awaiting a further advice regarding the precise location prior to issuing a related Notice to River Users.

2.14. A meeting of the Hamble Estuary Partnership was held on 14th June 2016.

- A presentation was given on Natural England's plans to develop a continuous coastal path around the English coast by 2020. Work on developing the Calshot to Gosport stretch started during summer 2016, and is hoped to open in summer 2019.
- The Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership provided an update on the River Hamble to Portchester Costal Flood & Erosion Risk Strategy.
- HEP member gave an update on their organisation's work that is relevant to the Hamble Estuary.

Members are encouraged to view the minutes and presentations at http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hambleestuarypartnership/hep-members.htm

2.15. The EDM delivered a presentation at a community day in Bursledon on RHHA's environmental management of the River.

2.16. There have been a few sightings of a seal during the summer, and in July a river user reported a sighting of a marine mammal with a blowhole near Universal Marina. She also reported it to Sea Watch and based on the description and behaviour the Sea Watch officer confirmed this as bottle nose dolphin. The EDM filled in the relevant 'sighting form' on the Wildlife Trust's (WT) website on behalf of the mooring holder. Any future sightings by river users can be recorded and reported using the WT's website.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the River Hamble Harbour Management Committee notes this report.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Improvement 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	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

1.2. The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;

1.3. Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

1.4. Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionally low.

1.5. **Equalities Impact Assessment:**

A full Equalities Impact Assessment for the River Hamble Harbour Authority's compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code (including environmental responsibilities) has been carried out and this report does not raise any issues not previously covered by that Assessment.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. This report does not deal with any issues relating to crime and disorder.

3. Climate Change:

3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption? The contents of this report have no impact on carbon footprint or energy consumption

3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts? Not applicable to this report.