

Name of Committee:	Cabinet		
Committee Date:	6 March 2024		
Report Title:	Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan (CHIAP)		
Responsible Officer:	Lyll Cairns, Executive Head of Coastal Service		
Cabinet Lead:	Cllr Liz Fairhurst – Cabinet Lead for Coastal		
Status:	Non-Exempt		
Urgent Decision:	No	Key Decision:	Yes
Appendices:	N/A		
Background Papers:	<p>North Solent Shoreline Management plan Shoreline Management Plan - Shoreline Management Plan (northsolentsmp.co.uk)</p> <p>Hayling Island Draft Coastal Management Strategy https://coastalpartners.org.uk/project/hayling-island-coastal-management-strategy-2120/</p> <p>National FCERM Strategy for England (2020) Environment Agency – National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>Natural England 2021 https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5535304204419072</p> <p>HBC A Plan for Chichester Harbour Havant Borough Council</p>		
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Report Number:	HBC/88/2024		

Corporate Priorities:

Supports Havant Borough Council’s Corporate Strategy ‘Pride in Place’ aspiration, which is to create a great place to live, work and enjoy.

The Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan will help communities and stakeholders plan and adapt to flood and coastal erosion risks within Chichester Harbour. It will also identify projects, actions and approaches that contribute towards the improvement of the Council’s coastal environment and, that prevent the ongoing declines in the Chichester Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest, which is currently in unfavourable, declining condition. This will enable the Council to maintain and enhance its coastline and harbours for wildlife and continue to deliver projects to protect our coastline whilst embedding environmental matters and considering environmental impacts in all its decisions to help tackle climate change. This will therefore also contribute towards the wellbeing of the community.

Executive Summary:

Coastal Partners are bidding for Environment Agency Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Grant in Aid (GiA) funding to develop an Investment and Adaptation Plan for Chichester Harbour. The bid is not anticipated to exceed £2.2 million (including risk), however our current best estimate, whilst we are still refining costs, is £1.42 million (plus £426,000 risk). The Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan (the Plan) will help guide those who live work and play within Chichester Harbour, to plan and adapt to flooding and coastal change in the future, while helping to improve the unfavourable, declining environmental condition of the Harbour.

The Plan will identify flexible adaptation pathways to guide future management decisions, identify triggers for action and a short-term package of resilience projects for both people and nature, directly developed by the community, landowners, stakeholders and regulators.

Coastal Partners will lead the delivery of the Plan on behalf of Havant Borough Council and Chichester District Council. Coastal Partners have the support of our other partners, including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Chichester Harbour Conservancy and Chichester District Council in making this funding bid with a strong acknowledgement of the need for the Plan.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Approves that the Council shall be the lead authority to submit a business case on behalf of Havant Borough Council and Chichester District Council for funding for up to £2.2 million (including risk) of Environment Agency Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in Aid to fund development of the Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan.
2. Approves the preparation and delivery of a Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan to help strengthen the resilience of the communities and environment of Chichester Harbour to flooding and coastal change to the year 2100 and beyond, if funding is secured.
3. Approves that the Council, on behalf of Havant Borough Council and Chichester District Council, lead, manage, administer funds and undertake the work to develop the Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan and delivery plan of short-term resilience projects, subject to securing the necessary funding.
4. Delegates authority to the Executive Head of Coastal Partners, following consultation with the S151 Officer, to spend grant in aid and appoint professional services (if required) to develop and deliver the Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan, subject to securing the necessary funding.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Coastal Partners are bidding for Environment Agency Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Grant in Aid (GiA) funding to develop an Investment and Adaptation Plan for Chichester Harbour. The bid is not anticipated to exceed £2.2 million (including risk), however our current best estimate, whilst we are still refining costs, is £1.42 million (plus £426,000 risk).
- 1.2. The Investment and Adaptation Plan will help guide those who live work and play within Chichester Harbour, plan, and adapt to flooding and coastal change in the future while helping to improve the poor environmental condition of the Harbour.
- 1.3. Communities and stakeholders will be at the heart of decision making at all stages of the Plan.
- 1.4. A key output will be a delivery plan of short-term projects, overseen by a dedicated delivery management group.
- 1.5. The work will be undertaken by Coastal Partners on behalf of Havant Borough Council and Chichester District Council, working closely with regulators, stakeholders, landowners and the community.
- 1.6. This report seeks the approval to bid for, and if successful to develop an Investment and Adaptation Plan for Chichester Harbour.

2. Background

2.1. Chichester Harbour

- 2.1.1. Chichester Harbour, covering the shorelines of the Chichester Harbour National Landscape, is a popular, attractive place to live, work and play and one of the most important sites for wildlife in the UK.
- 2.1.2. The entire area is protected under a range of legal designations to safeguard the internationally important wildlife the Harbour supports.
- 2.1.3. Chichester Harbour falls within the boundaries of both Havant Borough Council (the eastern side of Hayling Island, Langstone and Emsworth) and Chichester District Council (Thorney Island to East Head).
- 2.1.4. Land use is mainly rural, with a number of coastal towns and villages scattered around the harbour.

2.2. Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management

- 2.2.1. The HBC adopted North Solent Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) (2010), which sets high-level policies for coastal defence management planning for the next 100 years, recommended a Hold the Line policy for the majority of the Chichester Harbour shoreline.
- 2.2.2. These Hold the Line policies within the Harbour, in some places, are no longer considered deliverable, affordable or environmentally appropriate, and consequently are in need of review.
- 2.2.3. The approved and HBC adopted Portchester to Emsworth Coastal Strategy (2013) and the Hayling Island Coastal Management Strategy (currently in development) identify the preferred approaches to deliver the SMP policies, but only for the west of the Harbour.
- 2.2.4. The majority of the Harbour therefore does not have a Coastal Management Strategy in place to review the appropriateness of current SMP policies and guide coastal management approaches in the future.
- 2.2.5. With sea level rise and coastal change, tidal flood and erosion risk within the harbour will increase over time.
- 2.2.6. Where there are defences, as sea levels rise, habitats are squeezed against these defences, resulting in the loss of important habitats and ecosystems, known as coastal squeeze.
- 2.2.7. The interaction between the different habitats and the features of importance within them is therefore an important consideration in planning the management of coastal flood and erosion risk in this area.

2.3. Environment

- 2.3.1. The Chichester Harbour environment is currently in 'unfavourable, declining' condition (Natural England, 2021), due to pressures within the harbour such as coastal squeeze.
- 2.3.2. Natural England estimates that Chichester Harbour has lost over 58% of its saltmarsh habitat since 1946 and continues to lose an average of 2.54 hectares of saltmarsh annually (the equivalent of more than 3 football pitches in area). <https://www.conservancy.co.uk/about->

chichester-harbour/pressures-on-chichester-harbour/coastal-squeeze/

- 2.3.3. Replacing and recreating this habitat is a legal requirement of the SMPs, through the Environment Agency's Habitat Compensation and Restoration Programme (HCRP).
- 2.3.4. There is therefore a need to identify and progress opportunities for coastal habitat creation within Chichester Harbour as part of this plan.
- 2.3.5. Without a clear plan in place for the future, regulators such as Natural England and the Environment Agency could turn down planning approvals for any new FCERM works in the Solent.

2.4. Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan

- 2.4.1. The Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan will help guide the future management of Chichester Harbour's coastline and waters, addressing people, property and environmental challenges in one place, using an adaptive approach.
- 2.4.2. Building on the existing evidence base, the Plan will be developed in line with the National FCERM Strategy for England (2020), focusing on resilience and adaptation.
- 2.4.3. The Plan will aim to identify opportunities for coastal habitat creation and improvement that can help reduce current pressures and contribute towards a recovering environment.
- 2.4.4. Working together with regulators, stakeholders, landowners and the community, this community led Plan will set out adaptation options and pathways within the Harbour, defined by triggers for action.
- 2.4.5. An important element of this work will be to review SMP policies, updating policy and initiating the SMP policy change process if required.
- 2.4.6. A key output will be a delivery plan of short-term projects for resilient places for people and nature, which will be managed by a clearly defined delivery management group to progress, monitor, review and adjust the plan over time.

3. Options

- 3.1. Do nothing – Under this option no Investment and Adaptation Plan would be developed but business as usual work would continue. There would remain no collaborative plan to guide the future management of Chichester Harbour’s coastline and waters, addressing people, property and environmental challenges holistically in light of future climate and coastal change.
- 3.2. Do minimum - Under this option the Councils shall take stand-alone schemes forward. No Investment and Adaptation Plan would be developed. Adhoc management of the shoreline will continue, and projects would be taken forward on a reactive basis. There would be no joined-up plan for the whole Harbour, the harbour environment would continue to decline and engagement with communities and landowners would be on an adhoc basis.
- 3.3. Do something – Under this option develop a traditional Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy for the east of Chichester Harbour. Although the Harbour coastline would be covered by three Coastal management Strategies, there would be no joined-up plan for the whole Harbour. The Strategy would mainly focus on people and property, a real missed opportunity for the environment.
- 3.4. Do something – Develop an investment and adaptation plan for the whole of Chichester Harbour. Under this option a single cohesive, holistic, flexible plan would be developed collaboratively with partners to help strengthen the resilience of the communities and environment of Chichester Harbour to flooding and coastal change to the year 2100 and beyond. The Plan will put the community at the heart of decision making and focus on resilience and adaptation for both people and the environment in light of future climate change. This is the preferred option to take forward.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Strategy

- 4.1. This work supports the Councils Corporate Strategy ‘Pride in Place’ aspiration, which is to create a great place to live, work and enjoy, and will also contribute towards wellbeing, setting out a plan to improve the natural coastal environment for communities to enjoy.
- 4.2. The Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan will ensure we take a holistic approach to help communities and stakeholders plan and adapt to flood and coastal erosion risks within Chichester Harbour.
- 4.3. The Plan will also identify projects, actions and approaches that contribute towards the improvement of the Council’s coastal environment and, that prevent the ongoing declines in the Chichester

Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest, which is currently in unfavourable, declining condition.

- 4.4. This will enable the Council to maintain and enhance its coastline and harbours for wildlife and continue to deliver projects to protect our coastline whilst embedding environmental matters and considering environmental impacts in all its decisions to help tackle climate change.
- 4.5. The Plan will also contribute towards the wellbeing of the community.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Coastal Partners are bidding for funding to develop an Investment and Adaptation Plan for Chichester Harbour, on behalf of Havant Borough Council and Chichester District Council.
- 5.2. Coastal Partners will lead, manage and undertake the work to develop the Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan and delivery plan of short-term resilience projects.
- 5.3. Coastal Partners have the support of our other partners, including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Chichester Harbour Conservancy and Chichester District Council in making this funding bid with a strong acknowledgement of the need for the Plan and commitment to work collaboratively to produce a plan to meet local needs.
- 5.4. The Plan will identify flexible adaptation pathways to guide future management decisions, identify triggers for action and a short-term package of resilience projects for both people and nature, directly developed by the community, landowners, stakeholders and regulators.

6. Implications and Comments

- 6.1. S151 Comments
 - 6.1.1. Members should be assured that there is no direct impact on the Council's revenue budget or capital programme. The only commitment will be some draw on existing officer time and possible existing resources (which are sunk costs).
 - 6.1.2. If successful, the work undertaken from the funding may well lead to additional funding requirements and/or additional funding availability and potential economic benefits (which are impossible to quantify at this stage).

6.2. Financial Implications

- 6.2.1. Coastal Partners will bid for up to £2.2 million (including risk) to undertake this work. However, our current best estimate is £1.42 million (plus £426,000 risk).
- 6.2.2. The Council will be the lead organisation bidding for funds from Environment Agency FCERM GiA.
- 6.2.3. Coastal Partners officers will lead delivery of the project on behalf of both Havant Borough Council and Chichester District Council.
- 6.2.4. The funding being sought is FCERM GiA administered by the Environment Agency on behalf of Defra.
- 6.2.5. The project is included on the Environment Agency's Capital Investment Programme; however, allocation of funding will be subject to the submission of a business case, which will be technically and financially assured by the Environment Agency.
- 6.2.6. Although the project is identified on the Environment Agency's Capital Investment Programme for funding allocation, other financial contributions may be required from other sources to secure approval.
- 6.2.7. Coastal Partners have the support of our partners in making this funding bid with a strong acknowledgement of the need for the Plan, however, if no funds are secured then the project will not proceed.

6.3. Monitoring Officer Comments

Members can be assured that the Monitoring Officer has no concerns and is supportive of the recommendations. The legal implications are clearly identified within the section below. Constitutionally, this an Executive function for consideration by Cabinet.

6.4. Legal Implications

- 6.4.1. The Council will be identified as the lead organisation on the funding bids and will be making the application as a coastal Risk Management Authority (RMA).
- 6.4.2. These works are currently undertaken under s.1 of the Localism Act 2011 (power of general competence), which enables a Local Authority to do anything that individuals generally may do, whether for a commercial purpose or

otherwise (with or without charge) for the benefit of its area.

- 6.4.3. The Council, as the coast protection authority, is not legally required to do anything to protect against flooding and erosion. However, it has permissive powers to undertake sea defence and coastal erosion works or studies under the Land Drainage Act 1991, Coast Protection Act 1949, and Water Resources Act 1991, and act in the public interest doing so only when there is a clear economic benefit, an appropriate engineering solution which can be achieved and no contravention of environmental legislation.

6.5. Equality and Diversity

- 6.5.1. It is not considered that there are any equality or diversity implications as a result of undertaking the work identified in this report.

6.6. Human Resources

- 6.6.1. Coastal Partners has a detailed service plan to guide the delivery of its work which is signed off by its client board.
- 6.6.2. The plan has identified the resource required for this work.

6.7. Information Governance

- 6.7.1. Any data collected as part of the project will be held in line with Council's retention and data protection policies.

6.8. Climate and Environment

- 6.8.1. The Plan's objectives directly address climate change challenges and the environment front and centre.
- 6.8.2. The Plan's core objective is to 'by 2030, help strengthen the resilience of the communities and environment of Chichester Harbour to flooding and coastal change for a range of future climate scenarios, using adaptive pathways to the year 2100 and beyond'.
- 6.8.3. A key environmentally focused objective is to 'by 2030, identify projects, actions and approaches for Chichester Harbour to help habitats and species recover and thrive, boost biodiversity, improve water quality, sequester carbon, preserve heritage, enhance natural landscapes and restore the ecosystems and the interconnections between them'.

- 6.8.4. The Plan also recognises the need to transition and adapt management practices to become more resilient to climate change and to utilise nature to manage risks, through the objective, ‘by 2030 we will work with those who own land, businesses or assets around the harbour to help them understand their responsibilities and support them to transition and adapt to become more resilient to flooding and coastal change in the future using a combination of sustainable practices and nature-based solutions’.

7. Risks

- 7.1. If no funding is secured the project will not progress, meaning a risk to the FCERM delivery and environmental programmes within the Harbour.
- 7.2. The project has been carefully costed and will be applying for an additional 30% optimism bias applied in line with the treasury green book, so if any project level risks are realised this risk budget can be applied for from the Environment Agency.
- 7.3. The need for the project is well understood and supported by the Chichester Harbour Conservancy, the Environment Agency and Natural England, however, as this is a brand-new type of plan, Environment Agency assurance could be prolonged.
- 7.4. Although the project is identified on the Environment Agency’s Capital Investment Programme for funding allocation, other financial contributions may be required from other sources to secure approval.
- 7.5. Risk of raising expectations – whilst the plan will help us manage, maintain and enhance Chichester Harbour’s coastline for wildlife and continue to deliver projects to manage our flood and erosion risk, there will need to be difficult discussions and tough decisions. The project is about bringing the stakeholders and community on a journey, to understand and acknowledge their risk, identify constraints and opportunities collaboratively, and embrace adaptation in the recognition that in reality not everywhere will or can be protected in the future.

8. Consultation

- 8.1. Key statutory consultees including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Chichester Harbour Conservancy and Chichester District Council will be consulted throughout the life of the projects and have already been involved in shaping the need for and scope of the work required.

- 8.2. Throughout the development of the Investment and Adaptation Plan, the community, landowners and wider stakeholders will be encouraged to get actively involved, to allow local decision making, achieve community support and meet local needs.
- 8.3. Another objective of the plan is to 'by 2030, increase education and awareness of present and future coastal change within the Harbour, its risks and potential impacts to local ecosystems, communities, recreation, landowners, businesses, and infrastructure'.

9. Communications

- 9.1. An engagement and communication plan will be developed at the start of the project and kept live throughout Plan development.

Agreed and signed off by:		Date:
Cabinet Lead:	Councillor Liz Fairhurst	09.02.2024
Executive Head:	Lyall Cairns	08.02.2024
Monitoring Officer:	Jo McIntosh	23.02.2024
Section151 Officer:	Steven Pink	09.02.2024