

## **CABINET MEETING – 10 FEBRUARY 2014**

### **AGENDA ITEM 3 – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – ORDER IN WHICH THE CHAIRMAN WILL INVITE QUESTIONS BELOW RECEIVED IN WRITING IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING**

1. From Mr Page to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Councillor Dendle
2. From Mr Radmall (Chairman of Pagham Parish Council) to the Leader of the Council - Councillor Mrs Brown
3. Question from Mr Miller, Vice-Chairman of the Pagham Action Group to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Mrs Brown
4. From Mr Waller to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Mrs Brown

### **THE FULL DETAIL OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IS DETAILED BELOW**

#### **QUESTION ONE**

#### **Question from Mr Page to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services – Councillor Dendle**

Will ADC be able to assist the local community to put together a fund-raising proposal, identify potential donors and help draft applications? (We will need the help of Officers to draw up a project brief, with estimated costs, in sufficient detail to include in funding applications).

This is a very large project affecting the whole frontage and surrounding community. In Pagham, the residents (Including Pagham Yacht Club members) have successfully raised substantial funds for other community projects in the past, but nothing of this scale of complexity. It will be difficult for us to proceed without the technical expertise and backing of ADC Officers who will understand all the aspects of what is involved. I hope you can assist with this.

A trust to raise funds for Coastal Defense is in the process of being set up in Pagham, and Pagham Yacht Club has been invited to put forward a representative to its Board of Trustees.

## **Response**

We are very happy to work with the local community, via the Parish Council, the Yacht Club, the Pagham Harbour Coastal Interest Group, etc to source funds for coastal protection.

As well as providing funds in the report today, Arun will be making various bids in the Medium Term Plan bidding process in March – this will include a proposal to cut the spit. Of course there is no guarantee that our bids will succeed but we remain hopeful.

## **QUESTION TWO**

### **Question from Mr Radmall (Chairman of Pagham Parish Council) to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Mrs Brown**

Will members consider accepting the proposal from Pagham Parish Council that we work together in partnership to secure coastal defenses at Pagham for the immediate future and subsequently to put in place sustainable defenses for the medium-term?

## **Response**

Most definitely!

## **QUESTION THREE**

### **Question from Mr Allen Miller (Vice-Chairman of Pagham Action Group and Member of Pagham Beach Residents Committee to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services**

I would like to raise the following for the visitors' question time at the ADC cabinet meeting on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February. I include 2 photographs for your attention. The first photograph (DSCI0805) shows the present growth of the offshore shingle spit at Pagham. For the last 250 metres this is almost a straight line and makes an angle very close to 45 degrees to the shoreline. It is already accepted that the rate of growth of the shingle spit is between 80 to 100 metres per annum and this rate of change has altered little since 2006 when it first manifested itself. Given its present heading the 4 houses currently in its path (i.e. Nos. 95, 97, 99 and 101 west Front Road) will be flooded in July 2014. By mid February 2015 several of these houses will have gone and by mid May 2015 the end houses on

Harbour Road will be cut off, causing widespread flooding and damage to the sewage system. Photograph DSCI0804 shows the homes in immediate threat.

My question is as to the wisdom of building yet more revetments east of the 4<sup>th</sup> groyne, since if the shingle bank alters course only slightly the same problem will keep on occurring over and over again until revetments have to be built to the yacht club or beyond which is clearly a nonsense. The sensible action to consider would be to repair the 4<sup>th</sup> groyne and re-position the existing rocks in such a way as to form a gradual logarithmic curve so that the water gently accelerates through a 90 degree bend and not the sharp angle we had before. This will also prevent (westward) backward-going waves propagating up the channel creating greater scour. Please note that hard rock is highly reflective to water waves much like a mirror is to light, thus very little wave energy is dissipated. It is therefore important for the reflected waves to be directed out to sea or absorbed. Shingle is a suitable absorptive medium to this end. A logarithmic curve such as I have described can achieve this. My engineering colleague Tim Wright is also in agreement with these various points. By this method, the water scour problem to the east of the 4<sup>th</sup> groyne should be contained. However, it must be stressed that this is a quick fix to prevent further damage to the beach. However, we all sincerely hope that the ultimate solution of blocking off the channel and cutting a new opening be implemented at the earliest opportunity. It is important to note that the cut must be made first before blocking off as this will otherwise be much harder to do if there is a fast water flow in the channel. Furthermore, blocking off alone will risk water being forced sideways thus undermining the foundations of homes in the vicinity.

Finally I would state that professional opinions differ on self-closure of the harbour mouth. While Dr. Uwe Dornbusch has stated that this will be a likely outcome, however, Dr. Phillip Barbour the expert who acts for Bourne Leisure disagrees with this on account of the high speed of water flow.

### **Response**

I understand that the issue of Mr Miller's substantive question, i.e. the wisdom of building revetments along Pagham Beach, will be addressed in the report to be presented shortly.

The current works are, as Mr. Miller suggests, to strengthen the westerly groyne. We will be doing this by relocating some of the rocks from the seaward extremities of the existing groynes and in such a way as to deflect the flow in a curve out to sea and also putting shingle on the eastern side of that groyne to widen the beach width.

Shingle is a good absorber of wave energy but being of relatively small mass can be carried by currents. The next best option is to use rock of a size that withstands being carried by currents – placing this so as to present a rough face helps absorb waves.

The option to block the harbour is still on the table but one that we are not pursuing before the short and medium term repairs

#### **QUESTION FOUR**

##### **From Mr Waller to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown**

My questions relates to Agenda Item 5 and refers to the Lower Tidal River Arun Flood Defence Strategy (LTRAS)

In it, you are being asked to consider your Council's response to the draft West Sussex Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS), and in paragraphs 1.1.6 and 1.1.7 you are being told about the draft West Sussex Top-10 Priority List - which does not include the Environment Agency's Lower Tidal River Arun Strategy (LTRAS).

The reason for this omission is that the LFRMS' Priority List is flawed, as it does not include a single project relating to coastal, tidal or fluvial flooding. Rather, it is simply a subjective list which indicates those locations in the County which may be most at risk of surface water flooding alone.

This contrasts with the outline Work Programme which is attached to the draft LFRMS, and with the Environment Agency's own draft Medium Term Plan for West Sussex, the latter of which includes the LTRAS Phase 1 in 7<sup>th</sup> place amongst a variety of important surface water, coastal, tidal and fluvial future flood defence schemes.

You will recall the recent letter from Arundel Town Council seeking your strong support for the LTRAS, and which asked you to encourage West Sussex County Council to find a place for the LTRAS in its final Top-10 Priority List. This is because, without your support and in the event of its failure to be included in the West Sussex LFRMS' Priority List, the LTRAS is unlikely to attract the necessary funds, and thus the scientifically-assessed flood risk to Arundel will remain unaddressed for the foreseeable future.

My **Question** therefore comes in two parts:

1. First, will you please avoid endorsing the WSCC Top-10 Priority list as set out in the draft LFRMS?

### **Response 1**

WSCC have agreed that their Work Programme, and the priorities shown within that programme, are still in draft form and that any recommended changes will be given full consideration. There is a

proposal for a multi-agency group, which will include Arun DC, to amend as necessary and agree the priority list and this has been recommended for our approval by the Council's Overview Select Committee.

The current draft list was included to show which schemes are up for consideration and which have already been allocated funding. The on-going prioritisation of the work programme will be carried out using a process agreed by all risk management authorities in West Sussex and will likely involve factors such as political priorities, financial availability, social and environmental benefits as well as the number of properties at risk from all sources of flooding. The top priority sites, as agreed by the multi-agency group, will be put forward for either Grant Aid or Local Levy funding via the EA's Medium Term Plan or through local agreements. The other projects may be submitted in later years or have the risk impacts reduced through non-capital measures.

2. Will you please consider stressing to WSCC the importance of the LTRAS, and asking for it to be included in the final joint Top-10 Priority List of surface water, coastal, tidal and fluvial flood defence schemes?

### **Response 2**

Arun DC considers the Lower Tidal River Arun Strategy to be an important document and will ensure that the outcomes from that Strategy are considered when assisting in the prioritisation of the WSCC priority list.

This prioritisation process is not yet complete and so any project, including schemes within the LTRAS Study, could be included in the final priorities. An area not being on the priority area list does not preclude works being undertaken in that area; in the same way that being on the list does not mean that works will be undertaken. If there is sufficient support, financial resources and technical justification for the scheme to go ahead there is no reason for it not to progress.

There are many areas at risk from flooding within West Sussex and the public risk management authorities have a duty to use their financial resources in a considered way which produces the maximum public benefit for all residents. This means there will be difficult decisions ahead and some communities may not receive funding for a capital scheme, but all of the authorities are committed to reducing impacts through other methods wherever possible where capital funding is not forthcoming.