HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee	River Hamble Harbour Management Committee
Date:	8 September 2017
Title:	Environmental Update
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 in June and July 2017.

2. Updates

2.1. 'River Hamble Safeguarding Agreement' – ABP Southampton Water Capital Dredge.

The River Hamble Safeguarding Agreement (RHSA) is now closed, although any subsequent outstanding dredging activity in the same area will trigger its re-establishment.

In 2011 Associated British Ports (ABP) Southampton agreed to enter into a contract with RHHA titled 'The River Hamble Safeguarding Agreement' (RHSA). This was designed to protect the Harbour Authority and other River Hamble stakeholders from any adverse effects of significant excess sedimentation relating to ABP's pending capital dredge to deepen and widen Southampton Water during 2014.

As part of the agreement, ABP was required to carry out a baseline monitoring programme of depths in the River and of the levels of suspended sediment. This commenced six months before dredging started and continued until six months after the dredge was completed. In addition, many sites took RHHA's advice to undertake their own hydrographic surveys. Detailed data analyses were undertaken by Lymington Technical Services (LTS) and ABP both throughout and following the dredging works, at cost to ABP.

The impacts of excess sedimentation were only seen at one location. Under the terms of the Agreement, ABP has now reimbursed the owner the cost of the additional dredging that was required.

Although ABP has no plans to undertake the widening element of the dredge in the foreseeable future, the Safeguarding Agreement will be re-established should this become the case.

The harbour authority is delighted that the Agreement has fulfilled its purpose and it has been able to continue to safeguard the river and its users as a result.

2.2. Anode Research

Members will be aware that the Board has part-funded a PhD study into the:

'Evaluation of spatial variation in the dissolution of sacrificial anodes in the Solent and implications for management'.
The study, by Mr Aldous Rees of Southampton Solent University has been jointly conducted with Plymouth University. Initial results were presented to the Hamble Estuary Partnership on 29 June 2017 (see 2.3), to the Harbour Board on 14 July 2017, and discussed with Harbour Authority staff at a meeting to determine using the research to benefit River Users.

The study investigated anecdotal evidence that suggested anodes corrode quicker on the Hamble compared to elsewhere. Various theories have been investigated, as well as the composition of anodes. A survey of boat owners was conducted to determine anode decay rates and theories. Additionally, in-situ and laboratory anode experiments were carried out, along with water and sediment collection to determine Hamble zinc concentrations.

Hamble estuary's average total dissolved zinc resulting from the PhD sampling between June 2015 and November 2016 was 8.07ug/l, although single variations ranged from 2.28- 29.09ug/l. These samples were focused in areas of high boat density where zinc levels are higher. It should be noted that the formal Environmental Quality Standard (EQS) sampling undertaken by the Environment Agency across the estuary falls within the EQS requirement. This is set for estuarine environments at 7.9ug/l. Research into the species on the Hamble judges impacts to be minimal. Low levels of zinc within the sediments suggest that zinc is flushed from the estuary in suspension.

The main conclusions are that:

- stray currents and salinity are likely to be a reason for anode decay rates;
- there is a lack of awareness about correct anode use and effectiveness;
- varied anode corrosion is likely to occur beyond just the Hamble;
- anodes are the largest source of zinc to the Hamble.

Future work is likely to include:

- provision of advice for boat owners on anode use;
- determination of better management strategies to ensure estuary meets EQS;
- modelling of zinc inputs to estuary.

2.3. Hamble Estuary Partnership

A well attended meeting of the Hamble Estuary Partnership was held on 29 June 2017.

- A presentation was given summarising key points from the PhD investing the dissolution of anodes on vessels. (see 2.2).
- The Environment Agency introduced the Seaview Project, aimed at improving the estuary's environment. The presentation highlighted possible 'mitigation measures' relating to ecology and habitat. Members are now helping to identify any constraints or current uses of features as an initial step to help narrow down a suitable list.
- Each 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

3. Recommendations

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

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

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:

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

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

c) 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.

1.2. **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.