

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

18 NOVEMBER 2014

MONTROSE BEACH STUDY - UPDATE

1. CURRENT POSITION

- 1.1 As previously reported in Report No. 139/13, Schedule 9, the Head of Technical and Property Services has continued to implement the findings of the Phase 2 Report titled, "Management of Erosion at Montrose" and the proposals for Phase 3 of the project. Montrose Port Authority and Stakeholder Engagement activities have also continued as detailed below.
- 1.2 The measures proposed in the Phase 2 Report will slow down the rate of erosion in the dune system by promoting an increase in the height of the upper beach to reduce the susceptibility of the dune toe to wave attack without detrimentally impeding long-shore sediment transport. A series of potential measures to manage the erosion within the bay were highlighted and progress made to date on these is as follows.
- 1.3 Bathymetric Surveys and Programme of Beach Profile Monitoring were undertaken in April 2012. Further beach profile monitoring has been carried out since this time and will continue to be carried out on a regular basis and after major storm events.
- 1.4 Dune Management in the form of sand fencing has been utilised. Notwithstanding storm damage, particularly over the winter period, which has required repairs to the beach access ramp, the fencing is deemed to be a success to date as it is effectively dissipating the wave energy and facilitating the accumulation of sand to protect the dune toes. The fencing has needed to be re-erected after storms of December 2013, which also allowed for the redistribution of sand on the beach to the line of the fencing and toe of the dunes, and more recently in October 2014.
- 1.5 The latest formal Stakeholder Group meeting was held on 30 April 2014 and was attended by representatives of Angus Council (officers and elected members), Montrose Port Authority, Marine Scotland, Montrose Links Management Committee, Scottish Natural Heritage and GSK.
- 1.6 A proposal for a trial of near-shore recharge, by dumping sediment dredged from the navigational channel to Montrose Port, has been discussed and agreed in principle with Montrose Port Authority. Plans to undertake the trial, which includes obtaining necessary approvals from regulators, have been advanced. The dredging operations have though been subject to delay over the summer months of 2014. In the meantime, Angus Council has a sediment tracing contract in place to provide evidence on how effective near-shore recharge would be in keeping sediment within the bay and ideally allowing accretion of sediment on the beach and dune system. The tracing will also identify if any sediment is finding its way back into the navigation channel on the River South Esk.
- 1.7 It is also worth noting that the second generation of Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for Angus is about to enter into its consultation stage for planned adoption by the end of 2014/15. The SMP2 has relied heavily on the work of the University of Dundee for the development of the management approach for Montrose Bay. The first SMP, which was published in 2002, allowed for a combination of limited intervention and managed retreat for a period of up to 10 years, followed by no active intervention. The preferred policy for consultation in SMP2, which has been considered against periods over 0-20; 20-50 and 50-100 years, is a 'managed realignment'. This will enable the dune system to function naturally with minimal interference, but allow localised dune management if necessary to maintain the integrity of the dunes, through managed realignment and monitoring. Set-back of some parts of the Golf Course will be required. Potential for beneficial use of River South Esk dredged material along the frontage as part of the scheme is also included.
- 1.8 The council's budgetary commitment to the Montrose Beach Study since 2011/12 amounts to £386,000, of which £55,000 remains to be spent on further necessary dune management to maintain the integrity of the dunes, through managed realignment and monitoring.

1.9 Such managed realignment as identified in the preferred policy for consultation on SMP2 will require due consideration by the council and the Montrose Links Management Committee, as the party responsible for the affected land. In this regard, communication between the council and the Montrose Links Management Committee has been increasing recently. Further meetings will allow for the detailed methodology for a managed retreat proposal to be consulted upon.

1.10 A report on the proposed Shoreline Management Plan 2 will be presented to a future committee for approval.

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