

Notice of:	Cabinet Member for Climate Change
Decision Number:	PH32/2024
Relevant Officer:	Clare Nolan-Barnes, Head of Coastal and Environmental Partnerships
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Jane Hugo, Cabinet Member for Climate Change
Date of Decision:	11 March 2023

ANCHORSHOLME COAST PROTECTION – APPLICATION TO THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR CONSTRUCTION OF GROYNES

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To seek approval for the Council to apply for further funding for the Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme to fund the installation of groynes and to seek approval to enter into a Deed of Variation to the original Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme Contract to enable the construction of the groynes.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To grant the Authority to make an application to the Environment Agency by means of a variation to the original Anchorsholme Coast Protection scheme for additional funding to enable groynes to be constructed at the Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme.
- 2.2 To approve the design and construction of the groynes to be carried out by the original contractor for the Anchorsholme Coast Protection scheme by means of Deed of Variation to the original contract.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The benefit of requesting funding now would mean that there are efficiencies in utilising the site compound for both rock armour and groyne work and this is the optimum opportunity to apply for the funding.

It is unlikely that a separate application for funding in the future would be successful, as the protection economic benefits for the Anchorsholme Coast protection scheme have been utilised.

Initial feedback from the Environment Agency has been positive and suggest a variation for

additional funding is sought for the Anchorsholme Coast Protection scheme to include rock groynes.

The beach levels are lower than expected in the original design for Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme and if the beach lowering is not addressed with early intervention the toe of the new seawall will not be protected and the defences compromised and in addition, there is a danger that the beach will continue to lower and the beach could be lost.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 The Council could retain the status quo and not apply for funding but it will be difficult to make a separate application for funding later as the properties protected have already been counted in the economic case for the original funding. Further delay to beach management intervention may result in the opportunity to protect the seawall in Anchorsholme being lost and result in erosion of the foundations to the seawall.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

6.0 Background information

6.1 Funding for the Anchorsholme Coast Protection scheme was approved in 2013 and work commenced in 2014, during construction there was a requirement for additional works to the headland area and further approval was given by the Environment Agency in 2016 for these works. In addition further funding was approved in 2021 to enable the Council to complete its contractual duties in connection with the scheme.

6.2 A defect had been detected in 2017 following a storm and a resolution has now been reached with the Contractor to place rock armour on the revetment, the cost of which will be borne by the Contractor and its insurers.

6.3 During the last two years Blackpool Council together with Jacobs, appointed as its consultant, have been carrying out studies to inform the outline business case for coast protection and beach management along the Blackpool frontage.

6.4 Whilst carrying out the study to inform the business case for Bispham (which is adjacent to

Anchorsholme) accelerated beach lowering at Anchorsholme was confirmed by foreshore observations and analysis.

- 6.5 These trends have been identified as being due to climate change, increased storminess (cyclic, episodic, “new normal”), sea level rise, reduced supply of material from offshore, sediment transport along this coast, channels and sandbanks.
- 6.6 In order to retain the beach/sand, it is proposed that groynes are placed during the construction period for the rock armour works to the revetment wall.
- 6.7 Subject to Cabinet Member approval Blackpool Council is requesting a variation to the original Environment Agency funding in the sum of circa £11m to provide rock groynes along the Anchorsholme frontage.
- 6.8 The purpose of the groynes would:
- Act as headlands to trap and retain natural onshore supply of sand;
 - Stabilise and retains upper beach at toe of revetment;
 - Stabilise immediate foreshore area to maintain upper beach (typically smaller and of steeper slope);
 - Deflect tidal currents offshore –reduce scour from tidal currents;
 - Smooth offshore alignment –to prevent creation of localised gyres/ scour; and
 - Enables continued dynamic beach and supply of sand to north (Morecambe Bay internationally designated)
- 6.9 The groyne timetable from design to constructions will tie in with the defects repair work and provides efficiencies as the Contractor is on site and the majority of the preliminary costs for the groynes would be included in the defect works costs.
- 6.10 The benefit of requesting funding now would mean that there are efficiencies in utilising the site compound for both rock armour and groyne work and this is the optimum opportunity to apply for the funding.
- 6.11 It is unlikely that a separate application for funding in the future would be successful, as the protection economic benefits for the Anchorsholme Coast protection scheme have been utilised.
- 6.12 Initial feedback from the Environment Agency has been positive and suggest a variation for additional funding is sought for the Anchorsholme Coast Protection scheme to include rock groynes.
- 6.13 The estimated variation costs is £11m which would be funded by the Environment Agency.
- 6.14 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

None.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 Blackpool Council will make an application to the Environment Agency for funding in the sum of £11m. The scheme will only proceed if this funding is granted.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 A deed of variation will be required to the original Anchorsholme Coast protection scheme to include the rock groynes in the Contract and some Contract Amendments will be proposed and negotiated. Support from internal, and where necessary, external legal advisors will be obtained.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 Increase cost and availability of rock materials has been considered and mitigated by increasing the contingency allowance in the application to the Environment Agency for funding.

10.2 The risk of not applying for funding now would likely mean that the opportunity to apply in future years is lost.

10.3 A full risk register for construction will be developed with the Contractor.

11.0 Equalities considerations and the impact of this decision for our children and young people:

11.1 The equality impact analysis for the 2013 scheme will be assessed and a further assessment will be carried out during design of the scheme. Extensive consultation will be held with all stakeholders to assess any impact of the proposed change to the sea wall.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 The proposals for rock groynes will address the beach lowering issue and provide additional habitat creation in the rock groynes.

12.2 The application for groynes will require planning permission and need to provide 10% biodiversity net gain.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 Consultation will take place following approval to proceed with external stakeholders including the RNLI, Coastguard and internal stakeholders.

13.2 A consultation plan will also be developed.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None

ONLY APPLICABLE FOR REPORTS WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY BE CONSIDERED BY THE EXECUTIVE/CABINET MEMBER

15.0 Key decision information:

15.1 Is this a key decision? No

15.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

15.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

15.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

16.0 Call-in information:

16.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

16.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

17.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed:

Date approved:

18.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

18.1 None

19.0 Executive decision:

19.1 The Cabinet Member agreed the recommendation as outlined above namely:

1. To grant the Authority to make an application to the Environment Agency by means of a variation to the original Anchorsholme Coast Protection scheme for additional funding to enable groynes to be constructed at the Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme.
2. To approve the design and construction of the groynes to be carried out by the original contractor for the Anchorsholme Coast Protection scheme by means of Deed of Variation to the original contract.

20.0 Date of Decision:

20.1 11 March 2024

21.0 Reason(s) for decision:

21.1 The benefit of requesting funding now would mean that there are efficiencies in utilising the site compound for both rock armour and groyne work and this is the optimum opportunity to apply for the funding.

It is unlikely that a separate application for funding in the future would be successful, as the protection economic benefits for the Anchorsholme Coast protection scheme have been utilised.

Initial feedback from the Environment Agency has been positive and suggest a variation for additional funding is sought for the Anchorsholme Coast Protection scheme to include rock groynes.

The beach levels are lower than expected in the original design for Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme and if the beach lowering is not addressed with early intervention the

toe of the new seawall will not be protected and the defences compromised and in addition, there is a danger that the beach will continue to lower and the beach could be lost.

22.0 Date Decision published:

22.1 11 March 2024

23.0 Executive Members in attendance:

23.1

24.0 Call-in:

24.1

25.0 Notes:

25.1