

# Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - Protecting, Preserving and Promoting The River Itchen in Southampton

Thursday, 19th January, 2023  
at 5.30 pm

## **PLEASE NOTE TIME OF MEETING**

Conference Room 3 - Civic Centre

This meeting is open to the public

### **Members**

Councillor Savage (Chair)  
Councillor T Bunday  
Councillor Cooper  
Councillor Moulton (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor White

### **Contacts**

Democratic Support Officer  
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### **Scrutiny Manager**

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## **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

### **Role of Scrutiny Panel Inquiry –**

**Purpose:** In partnership with stakeholders to identify opportunities to protect, preserve and promote the River Itchen in Southampton.

**Use of Social Media:-** The Council supports the video or audio recording of meetings open to the public, for either live or subsequent broadcast. However, if, in the Chair's opinion, a person filming or recording a meeting or taking photographs is interrupting proceedings or causing a disturbance, under the Council's Standing Orders the person can be ordered to stop their activity, or to leave the meeting.

By entering the meeting room you are consenting to being recorded and to the use of those images and recordings for broadcasting and or/training purposes. The meeting may be recorded by the press or members of the public.

Any person or organisation filming, recording or broadcasting any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them doing so.

Details of the Council's Guidance on the recording of meetings is available on the Council's website.

### **Southampton: Corporate Plan 2020-2025**

sets out the four key outcomes:

- Communities, culture & homes - Celebrating the diversity of cultures within Southampton; enhancing our cultural and historical offer and using these to help transform our communities.
- Green City - Providing a sustainable, clean, healthy and safe environment for everyone. Nurturing green spaces and embracing our waterfront.
- Place shaping - Delivering a city for future generations. Using data, insight and vision to meet the current and future needs of the city.
- Wellbeing - Start well, live well, age well, die well; working with other partners and other services to make sure that customers get the right help at the right time

### **Public Representations**

At the discretion of the Chair, members of the public may address the meeting about any report on the agenda for the meeting in which they have a relevant interest.

**Smoking policy** – the Council operates a no-smoking policy in all civic buildings.

**MOBILE TELEPHONES:-** Please switch your mobile telephones or other IT to silent whilst in the meeting.

**Fire Procedure** – in the event of a fire or other emergency a continuous alarm will sound and you will be advised by Council officers what action to take.

**Access** – access is available for the disabled. Please contact the Democratic Support Officer who will help to make any necessary arrangements.

### **Dates of Meetings: Municipal Year 2022/2023**

6 October 2022
17 November 2022
1 December 2022
19 January 2023
16 February 2023
2 March 2023
20 April 2023

## CONDUCT OF MEETING

### **Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference of the Committee are contained in the Council's Constitution.

### **Business to be discussed**

Only those items listed on the attached agenda may be considered at this meeting.

### **Rules of Procedure**

The meeting is governed by the Council Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

### **Quorum**

The minimum number of appointed Members required to be in attendance to hold the meeting is 2.

### **Disclosure of Interests**

Members are required to disclose, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, **both** the existence **and** nature of any "personal" or "prejudicial" interests they may have in relation to matters for consideration on this Agenda.

### **Personal Interests**

A Member must regard himself or herself as having a personal interest in any matter

- (i) if the matter relates to an interest in the Member's register of interests; or
- (ii) if a decision upon a matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting to a greater extent than other Council Tax payers, ratepayers and inhabitants of the District, the wellbeing or financial position of himself or herself, a relative or a friend or:-
  - (a) any employment or business carried on by such person;
  - (b) any person who employs or has appointed such a person, any firm in which such a person is a partner, or any company of which such a person is a director;
  - (c) any corporate body in which such a person has a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £5,000; or
  - (d) any body listed in Article 14(a) to (e) in which such a person holds a position of general control or management.

A Member must disclose a personal interest.

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## **Prejudicial Interests**

Having identified a personal interest, a Member must consider whether a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably think that the interest was so significant and particular that it could prejudice that Member's judgement of the public interest. If that is the case, the interest must be regarded as "prejudicial" and the Member must disclose the interest and withdraw from the meeting room during discussion on the item.

It should be noted that a prejudicial interest may apply to part or the whole of an item.

Where there are a series of inter-related financial or resource matters, with a limited resource available, under consideration a prejudicial interest in one matter relating to that resource may lead to a member being excluded from considering the other matters relating to that same limited resource.

There are some limited exceptions.

Note: Members are encouraged to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or his staff in Democratic Services if they have any problems or concerns in relation to the above.

## **Principles of Decision Making**

All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:-

- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
- respect for human rights;
- a presumption in favour of openness, accountability and transparency;
- setting out what options have been considered;
- setting out reasons for the decision; and
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

In exercising discretion, the decision maker must:

- understand the law that regulates the decision making power and gives effect to it. The decision-maker must direct itself properly in law;
- take into account all relevant matters (those matters which the law requires the authority as a matter of legal obligation to take into account);
- leave out of account irrelevant considerations;
- act for a proper purpose, exercising its powers for the public good;
- not reach a decision which no authority acting reasonably could reach, (also known as the "rationality" or "taking leave of your senses" principle);
- comply with the rule that local government finance is to be conducted on an annual basis. Save to the extent authorised by Parliament, 'live now, pay later' and forward funding are unlawful; and
- act with procedural propriety in accordance with the rules of fairness.

## AGENDA

Agendas and papers are now available online at  
[www.southampton.gov.uk/council/meeting-papers](http://www.southampton.gov.uk/council/meeting-papers)

### **1 APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

To note any changes in membership of the Panel made in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.3.

### **2 DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, and the Council's Code of Conduct, Members to disclose any personal or pecuniary interests in any matter included on the agenda for this meeting.

NOTE: Members are reminded that, where applicable, they must complete the appropriate form recording details of any such interests and hand it to the Democratic Support Officer.

### **3 DECLARATIONS OF SCRUTINY INTEREST**

Members are invited to declare any prior participation in any decision taken by a Committee, Sub-Committee, or Panel of the Council on the agenda and being scrutinised at this meeting.

### **4 DECLARATION OF PARTY POLITICAL WHIP**

Members are invited to declare the application of any party political whip on any matter on the agenda and being scrutinised at this meeting.

### **5 STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR**

### **6 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2022 and to deal with any matters arising, attached.

### **7 PROTECTING, PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE RIVER ITCHEN IN SOUTHAMPTON - FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT** (Pages 5 - 8)

Report of the Scrutiny Manager outlining the focus of the fourth meeting of the inquiry and requesting that the Panel consider the comments made by the invited guests and use the information provided as evidence in the review.

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**SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL - PROTECTING, PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE RIVER ITCHEN IN SOUTHAMPTON**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2022**

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**Present:** Councillors Savage (Chair), Bunday, Cooper and Moulton (Vice-Chair)

**Apologies:** Councillors White

6. **APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

Apologies were received from Councillor Ivan White.

7. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

8. **PROTECTING, PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE RIVER ITCHEN IN SOUTHAMPTON - THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF THE RIVER**

The Panel considered the report of the Scrutiny Manager detailing the issues concerning the economic importance of the River Itchen in Southampton.

The Panel received the following representations:

Steven Masters, Harbour Master at Port of Southampton, Associated British Ports (ABP) summarised the key issues about vessel movements and wreck clearance in the River Itchen in Southampton as:

- Total commercial vessel movements recorded on the River Itchen south of Northam Bridge by the Southampton Vessel Tracking Service were 3,844 (2021), 3,238 (2020), 3,905 (2019).
- There is increasing propensity for vessels to be abandoned.
- There is no requirement to register vessel ownership.
- It would be challenging to keep a local register of vessels due to the high numbers in the Solent.
- Responsibility for clearance of abandoned vessels lies with the landowners where the vessel is located.
- During the past eighteen months nearly seventy wrecked, abandoned or illegally moored vessels have been removed by ABP and either sold or scrapped depending on their condition.
- ABP has invested over £500,000 in the wreck clearance project so far, and will continue to do more in 2023, whilst also undertaking increased patrols of river moorings to manage and prevent illegal mooring. Live aboard vessels present the biggest problem.
- Enforcing the rules on the river is difficult due to the number and nature of the various landowners and responsible organisations.
- ABP would welcome additional commercial development of the river, including an increase in moorings that are properly managed. This would limit illegal mooring and improve the appearance of the river.

Matthew Hill and Paulina Piotrowski, Economic Development Operations Managers, Southampton City Council summarised the key issues about the economic value provided by the industrial and business operations on and by the River Itchen in Southampton as:

- Southampton has a long history associated with the marine industry including the internationally significant port and port related activities, the Southampton Marine and Maritime Institute and Oceanography Centre, and a wide range of other marine industries including boat building and repair and yacht marinas.
- The sector depends on the limited number of sites which have access to the waterfront. It is important that these sites are safeguarded for marine uses to support the success and growth of the marine sector, including hi-tech and skilled marine activities.
- The Itchen Riverside area hosts a diverse range of businesses, local marine companies and institutions. It is estimated that there are between 500 and 550 businesses in the immediate area.
- Business sectors represented along the Itchen in Southampton include marinas, Southampton Dry Stack, marine aggregates, manufacturing, sports and leisure and educational establishments and training institutions.
- There are significant challenges in recruitment and training for the marine and maritime sector in Southampton and the Solent region. Action is required to develop and sustain a skilled workforce to enable these sectors to prosper.
- The Chamber of Commerce Local Skills and Improvement Plan is one important response.
- Business South is lobbying for changes to the Apprenticeship Levy to increase flexibility and to help people to relocate to work in maritime and marine industries.
- Co-ordinated by the Maritime and Transport Action Group, funded by the Solent LEP, ambassadors are going to schools to talk about the opportunities available in these sectors with the creation of the Freeport and the anticipated 16,000 additional jobs.
- A collaborative approach to addressing the skills challenge is required including British Marine (based in Southampton), Solent Freeport, business representative organisations, the City Council and through working with existing marine and maritime businesses.

Graham Tuck, Planning Policy Group Leader and Amber Trueman, Strategic Planning Manager, Southampton City Council summarised the key issues about how the draft Local Development Plan could impact the River Itchen in Southampton as:

- The emerging Southampton City Vision Local Plan with the Minerals and Waste Plan will guide planning applications for new development and will shape the city as a place to 2040 and beyond.
- Key policies and delivery issues in the emerging Local Plan relevant to the River Itchen include – Mineral and waste wharves, key transport connections, strategic flood defences (RIFAS) and environmental protection / enhancement, and potential release of some industrial sites.



- The Plan includes Waterfront Development Principles within a Waterfront Policy. The overarching criteria is to ensure the creation of a distinctive waterfront experience.
- The Waterfront Policy requires all development proposals within waterfront areas to ensure accessibility for all, work towards creating continuous waterfront walkways, cycleways and public spaces (potentially to link with the coastal footpath), create or enhance safe and attractive links to and from the waterfront, preserve and enhance views of the water and from the water, encourage a more distinctive and interesting skyline, be well-designed, attractive, safe and comprise high-quality materials, ensure appropriate, functional land use which is sensitive to the character and context of the area, not damage business interests of waterfront employment sites, compromise safety or conflict with biodiversity or flood risk policies.
- The Waterfront Policy supports marine leisure activities by safeguarding seven public hard, supporting proposals for marine leisure development and waterside recreation where there is no unacceptable conflict with water users, and restricts development on private waterside open space to private shore-based facilities and pontoons only.
- The Plan references five waterfront development areas – Ocean Village, Centenary Quay, Itchen Riverside, Weston Shore and Town Quay. Four of these areas, including the three sites on the River Itchen, have site-specific policies providing clear expectations for future development, ensuring positive change which fits with overall strategic aims for the city.
- The largest of the development areas is Itchen Riverside which currently plays a vital role supporting nearly 100 marine and industrial businesses plus water sports activities. It includes key waterfront regeneration sites, open space opportunities and residential areas. There is an opportunity for leisure-led regeneration linked to the football stadium and improved links to city centre and other waterfront areas. It includes nationally recognised Sites of Special Scientific Interest including important habitats and ecosystems. It requires flood alleviation works that will not prevent future development.
- The consultation period for the Draft Local Plan concludes on 3 January 2023.

To inform the final Local Plan and the Minerals and Waste Plan the Panel raised with the Strategic Planning Managers the following issues:

- The potential for an obligation for significant waterfront developments to have a docking station to facilitate the development of water taxi services.
- The potential to remove the safeguarding from the scrap metal site on Princes Wharf to help encourage relocation of the business to a suitable site.
- To consider the approach employed by Plymouth City Council to identify a financial value on the blue and green spaces to help aid decision making.
- To consider whether including a blue grid alongside the proposed green grid in the local plan to reflect the value of the water in the city.

Matthew Hill and Paulina Piotrowski, Economic Development Operations Managers, Southampton City Council summarised the key issues about masterplanning in Southampton with a focus on Itchen Riverside as:

- The Council has refreshed its approach to master-planning.
- New internal and external governance will be established to manage the masterplanning programme and ensure long term cross-party ownership and external stakeholder support.
- Activity will include in-depth consultation and engagement to ensure people and communities align with it.
- Initial focus for masterplanning includes Itchen Riverside and particularly a Development Brief on Gas Holder site, Britannia Road, Stadium, Waterfront, Aggregate Wharves, and Drivers Wharf.

Andy Tourell, Head of Sustainable Logistics, Ocean Infinity summarised the key issues about Southampton's 'Blue Highway' for water-borne travel as part of a transport network as:

- The vision of Ocean Infinity is a zero-carbon, water-borne, travel and transport network, connecting communities and delivering solutions against local priorities.
- Local waterways, which include the River Itchen, River Test, River Hamble, Southampton Water and the wider Solent present an opportunity to implement a city-scale "blue highway network" enhancing connectivity between our communities, open spaces, Southampton city centre, the port, employment and education hubs.
- Initially, delivering a proof of concept service across the River Itchen, Ocean Infinity anticipated that the network would gradually expand along the River Itchen before serving communities along both sides of Southampton Water, and ultimately connecting the Solent region.
- Vessels would be fitted with zero carbon power and propulsion systems.
- There is a planned progression towards unmanned vessel operation from a remote command and control centre in Woolston.
- Southampton City Council, Solent Transport and ABP Southampton have demonstrated support for the project. Ocean Infinity are developing a consortium of partners, spanning local authorities, land owners, developers, operators and the maritime industry, with an ambition of starting in 2023.
- Ocean Infinity promote this as a project, fully integrated with the Local Development Plan, conceived on the banks of the river, proved at the mouth of the river, serving communities along the river which can make a significant contribution to protecting, preserving and promoting the River Itchen.

The Panel recognised that the proposal could help to create a distinctive waterfront experience in Southampton and help to enable businesses to connect with their workforces.

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	PROTECTING, PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE RIVER ITCHEN IN SOUTHAMPTON – FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	19 JANUARY 2023
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	SCRUTINY MANAGER

<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>	
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Mike Harris</b>	<b>Tel: 023 8083 2882</b>
	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Mike.harris@southampton.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Scrutiny Manager</b>	
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Mark Pirnie</b>	<b>Tel: 023 8083 3886</b>
	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Mark.pirnie@southampton.gov.uk</b>	

<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>
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None
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<b>BRIEF SUMMARY</b>
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In accordance with the inquiry plan, for the fourth meeting of the ‘Protecting, Preserving and Promoting the River Itchen in Southampton Inquiry’ the Panel will be considering flood risk management and the River Itchen Flood Alleviation Scheme.
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<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>
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|  | (i) | The Panel is recommended to consider the comments made by the invited guests and use the information provided as evidence in the review. |
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<b>REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
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| 1. | To enable the Panel to compile a file of evidence in order to formulate findings and recommendations at the end of the review process. |
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<b>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b>
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| 2. | None. |
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<b>DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)</b>
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| 3. | The Panel were informed at the inaugural meeting of the inquiry that the Itchen River corridor in Southampton is a flood risk zone. Therefore, at the fourth meeting of the inquiry the Panel will be considering flood risk management.   |
| 4. | Tidal flooding is the greatest flood risk facing the city with approximately 10% of the city being identified as at risk. Currently, there are no formal raised flood defences in the city. However, Southampton City Council in partnership with the Environment Agency who are the responsible body for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers, reservoirs, estuaries and the sea, is in the |

	initial stages of developing a flood infrastructure scheme known as the River Itchen Flood Alleviation Scheme. This scheme aims to reduce the risk of tidal flooding to large areas of Northam, St Marys and Chapel.
5.	<p>To develop the Panel's understanding of flood risk management associated with the River Itchen in Southampton, and the approaches being employed to mitigate risk, the following guests have been invited to the meeting:</p> <p><b>The Environment Agency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blake Jones – Project Executive, River Itchen Flood Alleviation Scheme, Environment Agency</li> <li>• Dave Martin – Flood and Coastal Risk Management Partnership &amp; Strategic Overview Team Leader, New Forest, Test &amp; Itchen, Environment Agency</li> <li>• Saleena Hansraj, Senior Advisor Asset Performance, Solent South Downs, Environment Agency</li> </ul> <p><b>Southampton City Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annamarie Hooper – SCC Service Manager, Service Delivery and Compliance</li> <li>• Sam Foulds – SCC Flood Risk Management Team Leader</li> <li>• Car Brims – SCC Flood Risk Officer</li> </ul>
6.	The invited guests will take questions from the Panel relating to the evidence provided. Copies of any presentations will be made available to the Panel.
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Capital/Revenue/Property/Other</u></b>	
7.	None
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u></b>	
8.	The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.
<b><u>Other Legal Implications:</u></b>	
9.	None
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS</b>	
10.	None
<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS</b>	
11.	None
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	No
<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	None
<b><u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u></b>	
<b>Appendices</b>	

1.	None
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**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	None
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**Equality Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	No
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**Data Protection Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
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**Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None

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