

# **LGA COASTAL SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**As agreed 23 SEPTEMBER 2021**

### **OBJECTIVES**

The Objectives of the Coastal Special Interest Group ("the Group") are:

- 1.1 To increase awareness and debate at a national level of the environmental, economic and social issues that directly affect or which may so affect coastal, estuarine and maritime communities;
- 1.2 To act as a focus for liaison between member local authorities and other bodies representing coastal, estuarine and maritime interests;
- 1.3 To secure improved cross-departmental co-ordination with Government on coastal, estuarine and maritime issues with a view to ensuring consistency in policy and the provision of resources.
- 1.4 To work in partnership with other organisations with complementary aims.

### **KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES**

The key accountabilities of the Group are:

- 2.1 Preparing discussion papers or inviting presentations on issues of specific interest to coastal, estuarine and maritime communities;
- 2.2 Acting as a discussion forum for issues raised, with a view to reaching a consensus of opinion where required;
- 2.3 Liaising with other Special Interest Groups, LGA Boards and Executive of the LGA.
- 2.4 Making representations to Government, in so far as they are consistent with and will not conflict with or undermine LGA policy as a whole or damage the interests of other member authorities, so as to ensure that issues affecting coastal, estuarine and maritime communities are reflected in Government policy and the result is an adequate distribution of funding/resources.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.1 Membership of the Group shall be open to all those authorities with an interest in coastal, estuarine and maritime issues who are also members of the LGA.
- 3.2 Each member authority may nominate one Councillor to represent the authority at any meetings of the Group. Each member authority may nominate a deputy or "sub" Councillor to represent the authority at any meetings of the Group at which the nominated representative cannot attend. Member representatives may be portfolio

holders for related issues in their home authorities or have experience/knowledge of, and special interest and commitment to, coastal issues.

- 3.3 Each member authority may nominate one officer to represent the authority at any meetings of the Group. Each member authority may nominate a deputy or “sub” officer to represent the authority at any meetings of the Group at which the nominated representative cannot attend. Officer representatives must have responsibility for and experience/knowledge of, coastal issues.

## **MEETINGS AND LEADERSHIP**

- 4.1 The Group shall meet quarterly each year, with at least one meeting per year being held by video conference. A ‘Field Meeting’ of the Group will be held in an agreed coastal location. The ‘Field Meeting’ will be serviced by the host authority and a financial contribution, not exceeding £1000, will be provided to the host authority from the Group's budget.
- 4.2 The Senior Officer's Group shall normally meet within one month prior of the date of the next Group meeting. Three meetings per year will be held by video conference and one in-person.
- 4.3 The Chairman and Vice Chairman will be elected in separate ballots by the Group, each of which will serve for a maximum period of 3 years, before elections will be undertaken. In the event of extraordinary circumstances such as resignation, death, loss of seat etc of the incumbent the election process will be triggered and undertaken as soon as is practicable.
- 4.4 The elections will normally take place at the September meeting to allow for a possible change over of post for commencement in the January of the year following the election.
- 4.5 The Chairman and Vice Chairman should ideally be drawn from different geographical regions of England.
- 4.6 The Chairman will be responsible for chairing the Group's meetings and to represent the interests of the Group at other fora and to lead any deputations, as requested by the Group. In the absence/non availability of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman will assume these responsibilities. In addition, the Chairman/Vice Chairman may from time to time be invited to attend the Senior Officers Group meeting to provide a Members input upon the work stream.
- 4.7 The Chairman/Vice Chairman must each have a dedicated Officer support. The Officer supporting the Chairman will be from the Chairman's Council and act as Lead Officer to the Group and will also chair the Senior Officers Group. The officer supporting the Vice Chairman will be from the Vice Chairman's Council & will participate in the Senior Officers Group and will chair the Senior Officers Group and act as Lead Officer to the Group if the Vice Chairman becomes the Chairman of the Group or in the absence of the Lead Officer.
- 4.8 The Group will agree a suitably qualified and experienced officer from one of the local authorities participating in the Special Interest Group to act as its financial officer. They will provide the necessary advice on the Group's finances, costs of work plans, setting

of subscription fees etc and will provide the Group with regular reports thereon. They will be responsible for collecting subscriptions fees, normally in November.

- 4.9 The LGA will provide secretarial support to the Group, where requested by the lead authority, including the co-ordination and despatch of agendas, reports on areas of LGA policy and taking of minutes when the Group meeting is held at the LGA officers. The LGA will not undertake to support the 'Field Meeting' in the taking of minutes, but will coordinate and despatch the agenda papers. The responsibility for the production of the minutes for the 'Field Meeting' will be that of the host authority.
- 4.10 Each member authority shall have one vote on any matter upon which a decision is required. In the event that there is an equality of votes the person presiding at the meeting as the Chairman shall have a final and casting vote.

## **SUB-GROUP**

- 5.1 From time to time the Group shall consider whether it would be expedient for detailed consideration of an issue to be undertaken by a Sub-Group (or working group).
- 5.2 The Group shall decide the membership and responsibilities of any Sub-Group at the time that the decision is taken to set up the Sub-Group.
- 5.3 The Group shall also engage with other external Bodies to assist in consultation and development of the Group's work programme."

## **WORK PROGRAMME**

- 6.1 The Group shall determine its annual priorities and Work Plan through consultation with members and sub-groups. It should be brought to the Group for approval at a meeting, normally in March.
- 6.2 The Group shall keep the work plan for the year under review and may amend, alter, add to or make deletions from the work plan and programme as circumstances dictate.
- 6.3 The Chairman may appoint Member Champions to help deliver the work programme. These Member Champions may be portfolio holders in their home authorities of, have experience/knowledge of, or special interest and commitment to, the issue which they are appointed to champion. Member Champions may represent the Group at external events, in the press or in discussion with third parties only with the express consent of the Chairman.
- 6.4 The Lead Officer may appoint officer leads to help deliver the work programme. These officer leads must have expert experience/knowledge of, or special interest and commitment to, the issue which they are appointed to lead. Officer leads may represent the Group at external events or in discussion with third parties only with the express consent of the Lead Officer.

## **REPORTING**

The Group will at all times communicate with, advise, and influence the work of the LGA. In particular the Group will: -

- 7.1 Report to the LGA Executive through the presentation of an Annual Report. The Annual Report will report on progress since the preparation of the previous Annual Report and identify the issues that need to be pursued further by the LGA.
- 7.2 Provide copies of reports of the Group's meetings for information to the LGA Executive and others as requested.
- 7.3 Authorise the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Group to approve draft reports, prior to consideration by the Group, in order to meet specific time constraints set.
- 7.4 Utilise its website to post relevant reports and other information approved by the Group.

## **FINANCE**

- 8.1 All travelling and subsistence allowances incurred by Councillors/Officers representing member authorities at the quarterly meetings of the Group shall be the responsibility of the member authority concerned.
- 8.2 Any Councillor/Officer specifically requested by the Group to represent the Group at other fora and meetings will be entitled to claim and recover reasonable expenses from the Group's budget. Any person attending such fora and meetings will be required to report to the Group meeting at the earliest practicable opportunity.
- 8.3 An agreed honorarium will be paid annually to the Chairman and Lead Officer of the Group in recognition of their roles and demand on their time.

## **REVIEW**

- 9.1 These terms of reference and their operation shall be subject to periodic review by the Group.