



Orkney Marine Planning Update

October 2018

Development and Marine Planning

Introduction

We are entering an exciting new era of marine management in Orkney with significant potential to empower our local community to deliver sustainable development, protect the marine environment and realise significant economic opportunities.

This newsletter provides an update for Orkney's coastal and marine stakeholders on the development of local marine planning and resource management initiatives currently being progressed by Orkney Islands Council and our partners.

Orkney is uniquely positioned to deliver world leading marine planning, marine estate management and local governance to empower our local community with the tools to responsibly manage and benefit from our marine resources. The Council's Development and Marine Planning team looks forward to engaging with our stakeholders through 2018 to 2020 as we progress the following initiatives.

Orkney Islands Marine Planning Partnership

The Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, Roseanna Cunningham, announced in June 2017 that the Orkney Islands should be the next marine region to create a Marine Planning Partnership and develop a statutory regional marine plan. One of the main purposes of the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters marine spatial planning pilot was to consider appropriate governance arrangements and identify important lessons that would enable us to effectively deliver a future statutory regional marine plan for Orkney. An Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan will guide future marine management decisions in Orkney waters (to 12 nautical miles). A local Marine Planning Partnership will to help engage local stakeholders, take account of local circumstances and enhance local accountability.

The Council aims to take a lead role in the future Orkney Islands Marine Planning Partnership, supported by an Advisory Group of stakeholders representing local economic, environmental, community and recreational interests. The Council's Development and Marine Planning team will continue to work with stakeholders through 2018 to 2019 to develop the governance arrangements for the Marine Planning Partnership.

This will include engagement on the role of the Council as the public authority to deliver the regional marine plan and setting up the Advisory Group. An advert will be placed in The Orcadian on 18 October 2018 seeking views on the proposal for the Council to deliver statutory regional marine planning as a single public authority. Any public authority or person with an interest in the Orkney Islands marine region that may wish to partner with the Council and receive delegated responsibility for delivering a statutory regional marine plan for the Orkney Islands, should make representations to the Council.

Orkney Islands Local Marine Asset Management and Local Governance Pilot Scheme

Orkney Islands Council has submitted a successful stage 1 application for a Crown Estate pilot scheme to deliver enhanced local decision making for sea bed leases in the Orkney Islands marine region. This application will now proceed to stage 2 which will involve further engagement with stakeholders and the preparation of a business plan. The stage 2 process will be developed with the Crown Estate Scotland and wider stakeholders between the 15 October 2018 and 14 January 2019.

The aim of Crown Estate Scotland's pilot scheme is to develop a set of pilot projects which will test new or innovative approaches to asset management.

The premise of the Council's pilot application is to deliver an innovative approach to deliver local decision making on sea bed leasing through an Orkney Islands Marine Planning Partnership. The pilot will demonstrate the effective implementation of a new way of doing business, with decisions to lease seabed assets around Orkney (to 12 nautical miles) taken within the local community through a robust local democratic process.

For further information on the pilot schemes:

<http://www.crownestatescotland.com/media-and-notice/news-media-releases-opinion/11-projects-progress-towards-local-management-of-scottish-crown-estate>

Orkney Marine Environment Project

The Council recently submitted a European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) application to secure funding for the Orkney Marine Environment Project. The project aims to improve the availability and accessibility of marine environmental, social and economic data for the purposes of marine planning, management, education and awareness raising.

In advance of progressing regional marine planning in Orkney, the Orkney Marine Environment Project will deliver a detailed appraisal about the condition of the marine environment called a State of the Environment Assessment. This will provide a baseline of information using the most up-to date data and knowledge. Information about important social and economic activities will also be collected as part of the assessment. The aim is to promote the sustainable growth of the marine economy and give due consideration to any significant pressures from human activities on the environment. The assessment will look to identify data gaps and establish the priorities for future research and data collection.

It is intended that the Orkney Marine Environment Project will be delivered by a Marine Environmental Planner working within our Development and Marine Planning team. The project will provide the foundation for the sustainable management of our marine and coastal resources, establishing a baseline from which the implementation of future marine planning will be monitored and evaluated.

We are expecting a decision on the EMFF application by mid-November 2018. Further updates on this project will be provided in our next newsletter.

Contact us

If you would like to discuss any of the initiatives in this newsletter or have any queries, please contact James Green, Senior Policy Planner, Development and Marine Planning team, Email: james.green@orkney.gov.uk, or Telephone: 01856873535 Extension 2516.

If you would like to receive updates and future newsletters please make this request and send your contact details to the above email address.