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**Multi-million pound funding is awarded to investigate options and designs for Selsey sea defences**

Over £2.9 million has been awarded to Chichester District Council to develop options and outline designs for a sea defence scheme that would reduce the risk of coastal flooding and erosion along the 4km of Selsey seafront.

The money has been awarded by the Environment Agency after the council’s coastal engineering service, known as Coastal Partners, carried out early feasibility work, which highlighted that more than seven hundred properties could be at risk of coastal flooding if a 1 in a 200-year storm occurred. This number is predicted to increase over the next one hundred years, along with the number of properties at risk from erosion.

The current defences are now nearing the end of their life and although a lot of work has been carried out over the years to help prolong them, a long-term solution is now a priority. A detailed bid was submitted to the Environment Agency outlining the risks and asking for funding so that essential ground investigations, flood modelling and environmental assessments can start.

“This money is vital in order to help us investigate options to reduce the risk of coastal flooding and erosion to Selsey,” says Cllr Jonathan Brown, Chichester District Council’s Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environmental Strategy.

“We are seeing more extreme weather events, which could impact on the town’s sea defences and increase the risk of flooding, which is why it is so important that we are all able to plan and prepare. Although it’s not one of the council’s statutory duties, managing future coastal flooding and erosion is a key priority for us and we have permissive powers to undertake such works.

"The coastal defences for Selsey involve a number of elements, including seawalls, rock revetments, groynes, and beach. Over the last decade, the council has undertaken a very successful programme of beach management through shingle replenishment, and Environment Agency funding is currently in place to continue these works until March 2026. This has helped protect the aging seawalls from major storms and protected local properties.

“The new funding means that we can now press ahead and come up with options and designs that will allow us to bid for further funding to move forward with the work. We expect there will be a significant funding gap**,** so we'll be working hard in order to close this, including contacting the Environment Agency to highlight funding issues. We'll also be working with other partners and the community on funding options for a long-term solution because as things stand, partnership funding is necessary to unlock the government grant.”

Coastal Partners is managing the project and a consultant has been appointed to lead the options appraisal and outline design work. The funding will also help establish what is practicable for the area, particularly taking into consideration the needs of the community and anticipated financial challenges.

Councillor Jonathan Brown adds, “While hard-engineered defences won't be affordable or appropriate everywhere on the coast as the country adapts to rising sea levels, they will continue to be required in some areas. Huge amounts of work will need to take place to design and fund the scheme. If successful and all goes to plan, we anticipate that construction work would start six years from now.”

"This is a major project and during all of this work we will be closely consulting with the local community, as well as businesses and other public organisations who have an interest in the Selsey coastline."

Residents are encouraged to find out how they can help to protect against flooding. This includes signing up for flood warnings**:** [**www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings**](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings) ; making a flood plan - [**www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan**](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan) ; and protecting their property.

People can also find out more about the council’s shared coastal defence department at[**https://coastalpartners.org.uk**](https://coastalpartners.org.uk) and the response provided to flooding at: [**https://coastalpartners.org.uk/flood-response/**](https://coastalpartners.org.uk/flood-response/)They can also find frequently asked questions about the work in Selsey at: [**https://coastalpartners.org.uk/Selsey\_FAQs/**](https://coastalpartners.org.uk/Selsey_FAQs/)

**ENDS**

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