

**Agenda Item No: 5**

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of Meeting:** 5 January 2015

**Report Title:** Refresh of Seafront Strategy

**Report By:** Monica Adams-Acton  
Head of Regeneration & Planning Policy

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### **Purpose of Report**

To report on the outcome of the public consultation on the refresh of the Seafront Strategy and to present the resulting refreshed Seafront Strategy.

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### **Recommendation(s)**

That Cabinet

- Acknowledges the comments received by individuals and organisations which have helped shape the final draft document.
- Adopts the refreshed seafront strategy as set out in appendix A to this report.

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### **Reasons for Recommendations**

The existing seafront strategy, *Leading From the Front*, which covers both Hastings and Bexhill, was agreed in 2005. Since then, there have been many developments affecting Hastings seafront and a refreshed draft seafront strategy was prepared and put out for public consultation. A range of comments were received through the consultation process that warrant the Council's response and which have informed proposed revisions to the draft refreshed seafront strategy.

## Background

1. The existing Hastings and Bexhill Seafront Strategy was developed by Sea Space in partnership with the Council, SEEDA, Tourism South East and Rother District Council. Adopted by the Council in 2005, it set out a vision for a regenerated seafront in 2020 between the Stade and Rock a Nore in Hastings and Bexhill Town Centre and De La Warr Pavilion in Rother. The considerable development that has taken place on and near Hastings' seafront since that time has given rise to the need for a refreshed seafront strategy for Hastings.
2. Accordingly, a draft strategy document was developed. It builds on the original vision and objectives of the original strategy while also taking into account the changes that have taken place and the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. It focuses solely on Hastings' seafront and links closely to the emerging Local Plan and the Council's cultural regeneration ambitions.
3. External consultants were commissioned to undertake some research and a limited consultation with key stakeholder groups and businesses on the seafront. The outcome of this work helped inform the development of the draft strategy document which was then subject to eleven week public consultation period from 18<sup>th</sup> August 2014. The consultation was publicised online and via local newspaper articles. A dedicated web page on the Council's website provided links to the draft strategy and guidance on how to respond to the consultation. A one-day consultation event was held in the Hastings Pier Charity hub in the White Rock Baths in September.

## Outcome of public consultation

4. Twenty-nine responses were submitted by individuals and six from organisations. Ninety-five separate comments were made by attendees at the public consultation event. Although the total number of those who participated in the public consultation was relatively small, the quality and scale of responses received reveals a considerable level of interest in the future of the seafront and its importance to the town's economy and residents' quality of life.
5. The responses received during the consultation period have been published on the Council's website: [http://www.hastings.gov.uk/decisions\\_democracy/voting\\_petitioning\\_having\\_your\\_say/consultation/past\\_consultations/seafrontstrategy/](http://www.hastings.gov.uk/decisions_democracy/voting_petitioning_having_your_say/consultation/past_consultations/seafrontstrategy/)
6. The majority of comments received related to:
  - a. Parking: some respondents wanted more parking on the seafront, while others wanted less, or located away from the seafront.

- b. The desire for a bus service along the length of the seafront and ideas for alternative methods of public transport.
  - c. Improved signage, planting and other landscape and environmental improvements.
  - d. Future development of the West Marina (old Lido) site.
  - e. The need for improvements to Bottle Alley and Harold Place.
  - f. Issues around shared cycle-pedestrian space.
  - g. The importance of preserving key heritage aspects and sites along the seafront.
  - h. An emphasis on improving/maintaining a quality environment and quality new developments.
7. A number of innovative and well considered ideas were put forward for further seafront improvements and projects, which will inform future implementation plans.
  8. The draft strategy document was revised in light of the consultation feedback and is appended to this report.

### **Next Steps**

9. Following adoption by the Council, the strategy will be published and available to download from the Council's website. An action plan to deliver the strategic objectives will be developed, implemented and updated annually. It will identify specific projects and targeted actions, and will include estimated costs, funding streams, delivery partners and timeframes. The action plan will be regularly monitored and an annual report will be produced setting out progress, alongside any emerging opportunities and barriers to achieving the strategic objectives.
10. The strategy has been informed by local people's views submitted during the consultation. A number of organisations have expressed an interest in participating in further development of the strategy and supporting the realisation of the vision for the seafront. The Council will seek opportunities to engage with these groups in the development and implementation of the action plan.

### **Policy implications**

11. The strategy identifies the need for improved disabled access to some parts of the seafront and to events on the foreshore. The seafront offers a unique environment for leisure, recreational and cultural activity, and the strategy includes measures that will offer opportunities for all residents to engage in these activities as well as others aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour, thus contributing to community cohesion objectives. The strategy also identifies actions to support the growth of

the commercial business along the seafront, including the high number of black and minority ethnic businesses in the area.

12. Implementation of the strategic vision and objectives will require continued investment of Council resources, and the development of the action plans will reflect available budgets.

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### **Wards Affected**

Ashdown, Baird, Braybooke, Castle, Central St Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St Helens, Tressell, West St Leonards, Wishing Tree

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### **Area(s) Affected**

Central Hastings, East Hastings, North St Leonards, South St Leonards

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### **Policy Implications**

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Yes
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	No
Environmental Issues	Yes
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	No
Local People's Views	Yes

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### **Background Information**

May 2005, Hastings and Bexhill Seafront Strategy *Leading From The Front*

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### **Officer to Contact**

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