

Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

6 March 2018

Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy

1. Contacts

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2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Cabinet recommends to the Council that the definitive Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy is approved for use in the determination of relevant planning applications.

3. Background

3.1 New housing development across the Solent would without mitigation have a detrimental effect on the Special Protection Areas. In order to allow development to continue the planning authorities of the area formed the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership (SRMP) to deliver a strategic mitigation scheme.

3.2 The SRMP prepared an interim Mitigation Strategy, which was approved by Cabinet in February 2015. The interim strategy was based on a small wardening team and from the start it was planned that a full range of mitigation measures would be introduced and funded through a definite Mitigation Strategy to follow at a later date.

3.3 Following public consultation during summer 2017, the Definitive Strategy has now been published <http://www.birdaware.org/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=29372&p=0>. It has been endorsed by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), including representation from Chichester District Council. It is now up to the SRMP's planning authority members to approve it for use in determining planning applications from 1 April 2018.

4. Outcomes to be Achieved

4.1 The main outcome is to allow new development to be permitted in accordance with the Habitats Regulations and in so doing to protect the habitat for over-wintering birds. The Council will continue to collect financial contributions from developers and pass these on to the SRMP, who will then deliver the agreed mitigation actions over an 80 year period.

4.2 The definitive strategy includes a detailed monitoring programme, with the aim of demonstrating the effectiveness of the mitigation in protecting the over-wintering birds, and allowing for a change in the strategy at a five year review should they not be as effective as needed.

5. Proposal

5.1 The Strategy (see Appendix for full details) proposes:-

- a team of 5-7 coastal rangers to advise people on how to avoid bird disturbance, liaise with landowners, host school visits, etc;
- communications, marketing and education initiatives and an officer to implement them;
- initiatives to encourage responsible dog walking and an officer to implement them;
- preparation of codes of conduct for a variety of coastal activities;
- site-specific projects to better manage visitors and provide secure habitats for the birds;
- providing new/enhanced greenspaces as an alternative to visiting the coast;
- a partnership manager to coordinate and manage all the above.

5.2 Implementation of these measures and monitoring of their effectiveness, will be funded by 'developer contributions' calculated according to the bedroom numbers of the property, equivalent to an average of £564 per dwelling (increased annually to take into account inflation). This applies to new homes built within 5.6 kilometres of the SPAs. (This 5.6 kilometre zone is where the majority of coastal visitors live.) Some developments may require additional mitigation due to their size or proximity to a SPA.

5.3 Rather than charge a flat rate, as in the Interim Strategy, the Partnership will use a sliding scale of contributions. This will be:-

- £337 for 1 bedroom dwelling
- £487 for 2 bedroom dwelling,
- £637 for 3 bedroom dwelling,
- £749 for 4 bedroom dwelling,
- £880 for 5 bedrooms or more.

6. Alternatives Considered

6.1 Developers have the option within the Strategy of providing their own package of mitigation measures, but these will have to be funded in perpetuity (80 years).

7. Resource and Legal Implications

7.1 The Council already has to collect developer contributions through s106 agreements and unilateral undertakings. These are handed over to the SRMP every quarter. The changes in the contribution amounts will not alter the workload involved.

8. Consultation

8.1 The SRMP undertook a public consultation exercise on the Strategy between 17th July and 17th September 2017. A full report on the consultation responses can be found at: <http://www.birdaware.org/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=29158&p=0> .

9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

9.1 There will be a small financial impact on landowners and developers of new dwellings from the increase in contributions. These are still relatively small compared to the costs of a new house and are smaller than many comparable schemes nationally (e.g. Thames Basin Heaths SACs Mitigation). The changes only apply to net new dwellings and not to alterations and extensions, or to commercial property.

10. Other Implications

	Yes	No
Crime and Disorder		X
Climate Change		X
Human Rights and Equality Impact		X
Safeguarding and Early Help		X

11. Appendix

11.1 Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy – December 2017.

12. Background Papers

12.1 None.