

COMMITTEE:	CABINET
DATE:	5 December 2002
SUBJECT:	Draft Seafront Strategy – Implementation
REPORT OF:	The Director of Tourism and Leisure
Ward(s):	All
Purpose:	To seek Members' approval for the draft Seafront Strategy 2003 onwards.
Decision type:	
Contact:	Keith Morrison, Head of Tourism Development, 01323 415430 or internally on extension 5430. E-mail address keith.morrison@eastbourne.gov.uk
Recommendations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · That the Council accept a further report on Fisherman's Green/Community Water Sports Centre in 2003 outlining potential partnership and funding opportunities. · That the Council approves the Seafront Strategy 2003 onwards as a consultation document. · That the Council approves the consultation process outlined in section 6.0 of this report.
1.0	<u>Background</u>

1.1	The Seafront Strategy was approved by Council in 2001. The strategy sets out a ten-year framework for the sensitive and sympathetic development of the seafront.
1.2	Over the past 3 months a multi disciplined Council team has been reviewing the objectives of the strategy in light of current and future needs and wants and the new draft strategy outlines some new and amended initiatives whilst removing those objectives that have been achieved.
1.3	The attached revised action and implementation plan outlines the draft strategy and subject to Members' views shall then be completed in a more user friendly format.
2.0	<u>Amended Initiatives</u>
2.1	There are a number of amended initiatives identified in the draft document which highlight any necessary change in circumstance or direction as a result of implementation of the current Seafront Strategy. Key amended initiatives include:
2.2	<u>Helen Gardens</u>
2.3	Following the unsuccessful application for lottery funding of a new Bowls Clubhouse and related facilities the Council will now investigate a more modest extension and review leasing arrangements with the Bowls Club.
2.4	Fibreglass Chalets/Visual Amenity. The policy of improving fencing was originally outside of the replacement programme for the current fibreglass chalets into wood. The current "temporary" fencing will remain in situ and will be replaced in conjunction with the chalet replacement programme.
2.5	<u>Lifeboat Museum/Wish Tower Car Park</u>

2.6	The original strategy outlined five different actions for this site, which have now been combined into the development of a site master plan. The location is a central element, which would have a significant impact upon the overall seafront product and ambience. It is therefore proposed that a planning and architects brief is developed for the site in order that the integrity of the location is maintained within any future proposals.
2.7	<u>Safe Bathing Area</u>
2.8	The creation of a “safe bathing” area is very desirable along the seafront and the potential for permanently designating sea-zones is to be investigated for the entire seafront through a phased implementation approach.
2.9	<u>The Bandstand</u>
2.10	The proposal for a varied programme of music with improved catering is currently being implemented with some success and a future programme of activity and associated catering opportunities is ongoing. Similarly the use of patio heaters has improved the quality of attending a musical event at the bandstand and any further need will be considered in line with the entertainment programme.
2.11	<u>The Pier</u>
2.12	Relationships with the Pier’s management are very constructive with useful dialogue existing with the Pier. The Pier will be, where appropriate or possible, an integral part of future events, activities and programmes. Significant development funding has been made available by the Pier’s management company and improvements are coming on-line.
2.13	<u>Coach Drop-Off/Pick Up Point</u>

2.14	Funding from East Sussex County Council Local Transport Plan has been achieved in response to an improvement scheme developed by Eastbourne Borough Council's Highways Group in partnership with East Sussex County Council. Consultation is currently underway on the proposals with a probable start date for the scheme in 2004.
2.15	<u>Pavilion Tea Rooms</u>
2.16	Wheelchair access to the Pavilion Tea Rooms has now been implemented and alternative future management arrangements will be considered if deemed viable, for this facility.
2.17	<u>Redoubt Fortress</u>
2.18	The opportunities for external funding sources are being investigated with regard to the Redoubt Fortress as the current maintenance costs are high and facilities available are limited by the building's structure. Investigation of potential leisure or other users will also be considered in future plans for the Redoubt Fortress.
2.19	<u>Bowling Club to Fisherman's Green/Spray Water Sports</u>
2.20	The research and publishing of a planning brief for this site is currently underway and will be available in draft in March 2003. In addition, a combined community based water sports and activity centre has been discussed with potential development partners, mainly existing users of the site, including East Sussex County Council and a separate more detailed report will be brought before Cabinet in 2003.
2.21	<u>Bowling Centre</u>

2.22	The potential for a world class bowling centre has been investigated however a lack of external funding sources due to the development of international bowling centres throughout the UK has meant that this project has been reviewed. The town does enjoy very high quality bowling facilities for the sport and the commitment to retaining high quality facilities remains within the strategy.
2.23	<u>Princes Park Lake</u>
2.24	The Princes Park lake is a delightful area of public open space and investment in facilities, replacement of current seats and disabled access remain a priority. The potential for alternative management arrangements along with other development opportunities for the park will be investigated in order that the Princes Park will attract even greater usage.
2.25	<u>The Sovereign Centre</u>
2.26	Following the Leisure Services Best Value Review the potential for a private sector partnership for this facility is currently being developed.
2.27	<u>Skateboard/Rollerblade Park</u>
2.28	Proposals for the Skateboard and Rollerblade Park are to extend the current temporary planning permission beyond February 2003, the current permissions expiry date. A longer term objective being to find a more permanent location in consultation with elected members and the community.
2.29	<u>Land to the East of the Sovereign Centre</u>

2.30	Land to the east of the Sovereign Centre currently has a planning brief designating the area for development of a family orientated facility. Following the conclusion of the Borough Plan Inquiry and subject to the findings it is intended that the site should be marketed for development.
2.31	<u>Deckchairs</u>
2.32	The “zoning” of deckchair areas based on demand has proven successful during peak times. It is intended that further improvements are investigated between the Wish Tower and the Pier along with commercial sponsorship opportunities to fund any activity.
3.0	<u>New Proposed Initiatives</u>
3.1	The Review Working Group has also suggested in the draft Seafront Strategy <u>new</u> proposals which are additions to the seafront “product” with the objective of benefiting local people and visitors alike.
3.2	<u>Beach-based Recreational Area</u>
3.3	In addition to existing proposals for a volleyball/sandpit area, trampolining and children’s’ fun and games area it is proposed that the potential for a water based fun area is investigated and included within the Life Boat Station/Wish Tower Slopes planning brief. The facilities would be either operated by the private sector or heavily sponsored and would be a significant attraction to residents and visitors to the town.
3.4	<u>Son et Lumière</u>

3.5	The feasibility of developing a Son et Lumière (dancing water) attraction or event based offshore from Character Area four has been included as something new and distinctive for the south coast. It is proposed that the potential logistically and financially should be investigated during 2003 prior to any commitment being made within the Seafront Strategy.
3.6	<u>Pleasure Boats</u>
3.7	Allchorn Pleasure Boats are a unique attraction for Eastbourne seafront and the company are undertaking significant refurbishment of the boat stock. There may be some future remedial work required to assist the company in the provision of its services and these needs will be investigated and costed.
3.8	<u>The Pier</u>
3.9	In conjunction with Pier management our programme of attractions and events will where possible assist the Pier in achieving increased footfall.
3.10	<u>Treasure Island</u>
3.11	Following the successful completion of phase one development of Treasure Island and the increased usage of the beach area behind the attraction it is proposed to allow some appropriate children's rides on the beach behind the site increasing its ambience and attractiveness. This proposal is subject to receiving appropriate statutory approval under health and safety, planning etc.
3.12	<u>Seaside Awards</u>
3.13	In addition to achieving Seaside Award status it is proposed to apply for a Rural Seaside Award for Hollywell Beach in 2003 and Falling Sands in 2004 increasing our quality product range.

3.14	<u>Public Arts</u>
3.15	Using appropriate sites along the entire seafront it is proposed that the use of sculpture and interpretation is included in further developments or enhancement schemes to enhance the quality and experience of the seafront. External sources for funding such activity will also be developed.
3.16	<u>Events Seafront Strategy</u>
3.17	The seafront is already the “stage” for much of our events tourism and it is proposed that the seafront should host six major events of the quality and scale of Airbourne or Skate, to be held throughout the year not only in spring or summer.
3.18	<u>Cycle Routes</u>
3.19	With the increased demand for sport as an element of both everyday life and as a visitor experience it is proposed that the <u>potential</u> for introducing a seasonal and/or time restriction for cycling or skating on the seafront be investigated meeting safety needs and concerns of pedestrians and cyclists or skaters.
4.0	<u>Additional/Amended Initiatives for the Short Term Plan Wish Tower to Bandstand</u>
4.1	A report was presented to and agreed by Cabinet on 10 th April 2002 outlining a short to medium term plan for the area between the Wish Tower and the Bandstand.
4.2	The plan has now been integrated into this draft of the Seafront Strategy and the updated initiatives are shown within the revised action and implementation plan accompanying this report.
5.0	<u>Strategy Implementations</u>

5.1	<p>The draft Seafront Strategy encompasses a wide array of actions which are the responsibility of a number of Council Officers to deliver, very often in partnership with the private sector. The timescale for the new draft strategy has been amended so that:</p> <p>Short term means from 2003 to 2004</p> <p>Medium term means from 2004 to 2007</p> <p>Long term means from 2008 onwards</p>
5.2	<p>Because the seafront is a key tourism element, the co-ordination of the overall strategy lays with the Head of Tourism Development and all of the proposed initiatives are included to deliver a quality, exciting, stimulating and crime free facility for all to enjoy, whilst meeting the needs of our current and future visitor expectations.</p>
6.0	<p><u>Consultations</u></p>
6.1	<p>The Seafront Strategy involved widespread consultations both internally and externally and it is proposed that a final joint document is open to consultation from March to May 2003.</p>
6.2	<p>The consultation process will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A summary being circulated to households/business via the Eastbourne Review. Included will be an observation form to guide comment for ease of response. · Write with a copy of the strategy to key individuals/groups/partners for comment. · Press releases/radio interviews. · Locations where the whole document can be viewed. · Published in the web site. · Offers of attendance at meetings of relevant groups/associations to explain the Seafront Strategy. <p>A final report outlining comments and officer's responses will then be brought back to Cabinet for approval.</p>

7.0	<u>Timetables</u>
7.1	<p>The proposed timetable is:</p> <p>Cabinet approval for the draft Seafront Strategy - 5th December 2002</p> <p>Consultation - March to May 2003</p> <p>Final Strategy to Cabinet - May 2003</p>
8.0	<u>Resource Implications</u>
8.1	The works will be carried out by the Council Officers from the relevant professional disciplines. The programme co-ordination is by the Head of Tourism Development.
9.0	<u>Financial Implications</u>
9.1	All the proposed activities designated short term are either self-financing or proposed using existing resources within current base budgets. In many cases these activities involve work by EBC staff to do initial work on action points e.g. developing strategies, preparing tender documents and planning briefs. This work can be completed within current staffing budgets. However, once the initial work is complete, there are likely to be further resource implications in order to fully implement the action points.
9.2	For other proposed activities, medium and long term, unless indicated otherwise, funding is not currently allocated in the Council's five year capital and revenue strategies to achieve these.
9.3	Progress against these action points will therefore be dependent on future resource allocation decisions. An indication of the likely level of resources required to fully implement each action point is shown in the 'resource implications' section of the Action and Implementation Plan.'
10.0	<u>Other implications</u>

10.1	As explained above, the overall impact will be carefully monitored.
10.2	The proposals will improve and expand the opportunities for young and old on the seafront.
10.3	The changes will increase direct and indirect income from tourism and create some new employment opportunities.
11.0	<u>Conclusion</u>
11.1	The draft Seafront Strategy provides an exacting framework for development from 2003 onwards and when used in conjunction with the Tourism Strategy will provide a clear vision for tourism development in the future.
11.2	The potential for sympathetic redevelopment and partnership working is considerable with some of the initiatives proposed potentially adding significantly to the Borough's future prosperity.
11.3	The consultation process will be a valuable and appropriate means of gaining ownership of the Seafront Strategy from 2003.
Keith G Morrison	
Head of Tourism Development	

<p>Background Papers:</p> <p>The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows:</p> <p>Eastbourne Seafront Strategy 2001</p> <p>Report to Cabinet 7th February 2001 – Seafront Strategy</p> <p>Report to Cabinet 2nd July 2001 – Seafront Strategy</p> <p>Report to Cabinet 10th April 2002 – Seafront Strategy Implementation Plan 2002</p> <p>To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please refer to the contact officer listed above.</p>	
<p>(document reference)</p>	