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## LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PANEL

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Committee Room - Swale House on Monday, 2 March 2015 from 7.00 - 7.38 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Andy Booth, Derek Conway, Gerry Lewin (Chairman), Bryan Mulhern (Vice-Chairman), Prescott, Adam Tolhurst and John Wright.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Philippa Davies, Natalie Earl and James Freeman.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Bowles.

### 522 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 October 2014 (Minute Nos. 306 – 308) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 523 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

### PART A MINUTES FOR RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET

### 524 THAMES, MEDWAY AND SWALE ESTUARIES STRATEGIC ACCESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING STRATEGY

The Senior Planner introduced the report which updated Members on work that had been ongoing with other North Kent Authorities regarding the recreational disturbance of birds at designated European wildlife sites in North Kent. She explained that the documents would form part of the Swale Borough Local Plan evidence base.

The Senior Planner explained that the North Kent coastline comprised of three Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. The impact of planned development on bird populations, on both an individual and in-combination level, in north Kent needed to be considered. She outlined the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) which provided an overview of the issues and impacts of developments; the complexities of the ecological issues and the strict requirements of the Habitat Regulation Assessments (HRA). This provided an insight of the implications and next steps for the Council to be able to adopt its Local Plan.

The Senior Planner advised that there was a strong body of evidence on the negative impact of development on protected sites. A decline in the number of birds was caused by disturbance as access levels are linked to local housing, with much of the access involving frequent use by local residents. The main cause of disturbance was dog walking, particularly when dogs were off the lead.

The Senior Planner advised that development within six kilometres of access points to the SPAs was likely to mean an increase in recreational use of the SPAs. A strategic mitigation approach recommended the introduction of a tariff system, based on a per house contribution from the developer.

The Senior Planner drew Members' attention to paragraph 3.2 in the report which set out the next step of establishing a sub-group to take the work forward. She emphasised the importance of going forward in this joint working with other Local Authorities, without which would require application of the precautionary principle which could prevent the adoption of the emerging Local Plan.

A Member queried the justification of the levy of tariff of £223 per dwelling. The Senior Planner advised that this had been arrived at as part of the SAMMS by consultants who had experience of this type of work. It was lower than that levied in the Thames Basin Heath SPA and feedback from developers had shown that they were reasonably happy to pay this amount, rather than have to carry out their own habitat regulations assessment, which could then impact on costs and timescales.

Members queried the lack of mention of the increase in fox population, and the effects of wind turbines as issues with bird breeding. The Senior Planner reminded Members that the report was pertinent to the recreational disturbances of birds. A Member considered that birds of prey on the Isle of Sheppey should have been included within the report.

Members welcomed and supported the report and considered it to be both interesting and informative.

***Recommended:***

- (1) That the Thames, Medway and Swale Estuaries Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy 2014, and the Phase 1 Bird Disturbance Report 2012, as part of the Swale Borough Local Plan evidence base be agreed.***
- (2) That the next steps outlined within the report be agreed.***

**525 QUEENBOROUGH AND RUSHENDEN - INDICATIVE REVISED LAND USE PLAN: ADDENDUM TO 2010 ADOPTED MASTERPLAN - CONSULTATION RESULTS**

The Senior Planner introduced the report which provided responses received as part of the recent consultation on the Queenborough and Rushenden Masterplan Addendum. She provided an A3 version of the Indicative Land Use Plan and explained that an addendum to the adopted Masterplan had been produced in conjunction with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to reflect changing economic conditions and land ownerships. The Senior Planner outlined the main changes proposed to the Masterplan which included the reduction of dwelling numbers from 2,000 to 1,800; the removal of the proposed marina; the inclusion of the former ISTIL Mill and Thomsett Way sites for potential residential development; and a new central location for the proposed primary school.

The Senior Planner advised that in response to a large number of the consultation responses, the Council had worked with the HCA and added the red-hatched area on the plan for future creekside leisure, commercial and open space uses which provided more flexibility for the future of the creekside. In response to a Member stating that he would not like to see housing being developed if the hatched area on the plan was not developed, the Senior Planner advised that the Queenborough and Rushenden Steering Group would monitor the situation.

The Head of Planning stated that as planning applications came through, development of the site would encourage further progress of the hatched area being developed and help to address viability issues.

Members welcomed the responses to the consultation and recognised the vibrant marine economy and the potential for the area as a whole.

***Recommended:***

- (1) That the results of the recent consultation be noted.***
- (2) That the suggested change to the Masterplan Addendum be agreed.***
- (3) That the adoption of the Addendum to the original Masterplan SPD for Development Management purposes be agreed.***

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel