

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	10 February 2016	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2803
TITLE:	Urban Gull Strategy - Delivery Priorities	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1: Urban gull strategy – visual version		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The adoption of a revised and updated urban gull strategy and action plan for 2016-2019 to fulfill three core objectives of deterring the gull population; removing access to food sources and increased communication with the public to further gain their support in tackling the problem.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Cabinet adopts the revised urban gull strategy.
- 2.2 Officers progress, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, the following measures prioritised for delivery in 2015/16 and 2016/17 using the allocated funding of £60k. These are:
- a) Provision of a pilot gull treatment programme supported by a communications campaign for areas in Abbey, Kingsmead, Twerton and Midsomer Norton. This will be delivered through an external contractor chosen through an open and transparent tender process.
 - b) An additional officer for waste education and enforcement for 6 months.
 - c) The delivery of a comprehensive communications campaign.

The Cabinet Member, in consultation with officers, will apportion the budget of £60k to each of the above recommendations.

- 2.3 In addition the Council will enter into a collaborative partnership with the University of the West of England and Middlesex University to map and track the behavioural patterns of gulls and deliver a citizen science project.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 £60k has been allocated (Subject to Council Approval) for 2016/17 to fund recommended actions.
- 3.2 Expenditure is likely to be required in 2015/16 and resource to fund this will be managed within the Place Directorate budgets if budget allows, otherwise a drawdown from revenue contingency reserves will be requested.
- 3.3 No additional resources have been allocated beyond 2016/17 therefore any ongoing costs would need funding to support.
- 3.4 There are no financial commitments associated with the collaborative partnership with the universities, however this project will require an officer time contribution (already factored in to service planning and budgets).

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The Council has no statutory duty to act on urban gulls however it remains a high profile issue with local residents, businesses and visitors. The revised strategy will inform the Council's actions and spending on this issue for the forthcoming 3 years.

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 The administration requested a revision of the gull strategy in 2015. Tackling the issues caused by urban gulls is a political priority.
- 5.2 Officers have identified key actions which could be adopted as part of the strategy. These include:
 - a) The delivery of a gull treatment programme to remove nests and eggs from roofs in areas of B&NES. It is recommended that the chosen areas are Kingsmead and Abbey wards which support the majority of the existing gull population, a former factory site in Midsomer Norton and Twerton where there are an increasing number of breeding pairs. This work will be carried out by a procured contractor who will be required to provide regular updates and monitoring reports which will inform the gull behaviour project.
 - b) Additional officer resource, to work with businesses to ensure that trade waste is properly managed and reduce potential food sources for the gulls.
 - c) A collaborative partnership arrangement with University of the West of England and Middlesex University to better understand and map gull behaviour in Bath. This is to be complemented by a citizens science project which aims to engage with and educate the public about the behaviour of the gulls, increase the data collection, and foster a community approach to solving the problem.
 - d) A communications campaign to support the above recommendations.

6 RATIONALE

- 6.1 Whilst there is no statutory duty to take action on urban gulls it is a high profile issue for residents, businesses and visitors and is deemed a political priority.

6.2 The authority will address the gull issue using the provisions of the Natural England general licence

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 To continue the current approach without the allocation of additional resources. Given the rationale outlined in 6.1 above, additional resource has been allocated to this work.

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Senior Management team including Council's Legal Advisor and S.151 Officer. Cabinet Member and Cabinet Assistant for Community Services.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

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Background papers	Gull Scrutiny Day Report November 2013
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	