

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Planning, Housing Economic Development Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	3rd May 2016	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		N/a
TITLE:	Water Space Study: Overview of Study Brief	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix A: Water Space Study Project Overview – outline of the study brief and programme (available online)		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The Scrutiny Panel is asked to note the launch of the Water Space Study project, and to note the attached outline study brief and programme.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 To note the outline study brief and programme for the Water Space Study and to discuss any issues arising.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

3.1 The Water Space Study is a partnership project, jointly funded by B&NES Council, the Canal and Rivers Trust, the Environment Agency and Wessex Water.

3.2 Resources have been secured to deliver the study, for completion in March 2017 and this work is within these budget allocations

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

4.1 No decision is requested. While the Council does not have a legal duty to prepare such a study, it is envisaged that the study will provide a vital evidence base for future decision making in various service areas including Planning and Regeneration. Similarly it will enable the study partners to identify potential collaborative projects.

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Water Space Study was officially launched by the partners on 14th March 2016. The key aim of the study is to identify projects which can transform and revitalise the use of Bath's waterways.
- 5.2 Bath & North East Somerset Council, the Canal and River Trust, the Environment Agency and Wessex Water are working together in partnership, with the ongoing support of the Strategic River Group and key partners such as the River Regeneration Trust.
- 5.3 The Water Space Study will gather existing and new evidence to better understand how the waterways are currently being used. There is increasing pressure on the waterways for sports, leisure and recreation, while the River corridor within the Bath Enterprise Area is also a major area of development and change.
- 5.4 Engaging with local communities and key stakeholders, the Study will look at the diverse range of opportunities along the River and Canal between Bath and Keynsham, and along the Canal between Deep Lock and Dundas.
- 5.5 The Water Space Study will be informed by the continuing work of the Council and the Environment Agency and to investigate options for managing flood risk. However, strategic flood risk proposals are outside the scope of this study.
- 5.6 The Partnership is keen to engage with everyone who has an interest in the river and canal within the community, including businesses, the construction industry landowners, sports clubs, boaters and local groups. It is looking for find more ways for people to safely enjoy the waterways, in a way that can offer benefits to people, the economy and the environment.
- 5.7 The Study will look at aspects impacting on the River and Canal, including boat moorings, river navigation by boats, leisure and recreation opportunities and wildlife and habitat enhancements.
- 5.8 The project partners have appointed consultancy Atkins, who have been involved in many Environmental based River and Canal projects, including River Restoration projects, Marina Developments and the rejuvenation of the London 2012 Olympic Park Canal network.
- 5.9 The project is due to conclude in March 2017. **Appendix A outlines the study brief and program includes further detail about the scope and geographical coverage of the study.**

6 RATIONALE

- 6.1 The Scrutiny Panel was previously involved in the *Boat Dwellers and River Travellers: Task and Finish Group Review by the Housing and Major Projects Scrutiny Panel (July 2013)*. The Water Space Study will utilise and update some of this evidence, although the Water Space Study scope is broader.
- 6.2 This report offers the opportunity for the Scrutiny Panel to comment on the study outline and to feedback on how they would like to be kept informed as the project progresses over the next year.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 None

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Public consultation and stakeholder engagement is a key element of the Water Space Study. The focus for public engagement will be as part of the Bristol to Bath Festival of Nature 2016, between 10th and 25th June.

8.2 The legal team and monitoring officer and s151 officer have been consulted and had opportunity to input into this report.

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.

Contact person	<i>Cleo Newcombe-Jones Project Coordinator – River Avon</i> <i>Tel: 01225 477617</i> <i>Email: cleo_newcombe-jones@bathnes.gov.uk</i>
Background papers	<i><u>Boat Dwellers and River Travellers: Task and Finish Group Review by the Housing and Major Projects Scrutiny Panel (July 2013)</u></i> – available online.
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	