

Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 28 February 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Beach Amenity Development Plan

Report summary:

The Beach Amenity Development Plan (BADP) is a missing piece in the council's adopted greenspace strategy. East Devon's beaches are a core part of the district's tourism offer and central to our delivery of key parts of the council plan, and the climate change strategy. The BADP lays out an ambitious yet achievable vision of how this key resource will be managed in the next 5 years.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

Cabinet are asked to approve the Beach Amenity Management Plan.

Reason for recommendation:

As per the summary this piece of work is essential to delivery of the council plan and key policies.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy,
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sports and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

The equalities impact of the BADP is positive, with principle two focussed entirely on improving access for all to our beaches

Climate change Medium Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
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Report in full

1 Background

- 1.1 East Devon District Council's award-winning beaches are enjoyed by over ¾ of a million visitors a year and offer a much-loved leisure space to over 95 thousand local residents.
- 1.2 Our beaches and foreshores are renowned for their high-quality environments acknowledged by seven beach awards including four Blue Flags.
- 1.3 As such their sustainable management and the development of their visitor offer is central to the delivery of all three of the Council Plan's core aims
- 1.4 This work also offers opportunities which will play a key role in the delivery of the Tourism Strategy, the Climate Change Strategy, and the Greenspace plan.
- 1.5 The Beach Amenity Development Plan sets out an ambitious but achievable five-year plan for the management and improvement of our beaches and foreshores, focusing on 9 principles (note the principles are alphabetic not hierarchical)
 - Principle 1: Access for All. Everyone will be able to experience and enjoy our beaches regardless of their health or mobility.
 - Principle 2: Beach Infrastructure. Beach facilities will be well maintained, fit for purpose and sustainable.
 - Principle 3: Staff resource and capacity. Building the beach team to enable the capacity to fully deliver the plan and support the council's underlying strategies.
 - Principle 4: Community involvement. We will harness the enthusiasm of local communities and involve them in our beach management work. There is already a strong culture of community ownership of our beach spaces, which will grow and thrive.
 - Principle 5: Environment and Climate. Our response to the climate emergency and the environmental crisis will guide our beach management.
 - Principle 6: Grants and sponsorship. External funding of beach improvements will be maximised to secure their financial sustainability.
 - Principle 7: Health and Wellbeing. The beaches will be maintained and improved as spaces for informal recreation and wellbeing activity for residents and tourists alike.
 - Principle 8: Quality Standards. The quality of our beach management will be benchmarked against internationally recognised standards.
 - Principle 9: Return, reuse, recycle. Beach users will be encouraged to behave sustainably, minimising the generation of waste, especially single use plastic.

- Principle 10: Risk Management. Our beaches will be safe and enjoyable spaces for everyone to use. We will model and develop best practice as an example to all.
- 1.6 The second part of the BADP is an action plan which captures the specific things necessary to the delivery of the plan and assigns them both specific owners and achievable timescales, against which progress can be clearly monitored.
 - 1.7 There is no funding requested specifically with this report as many of the projects outlined in the BADP are still in the scoping/ development phase. Where internal funding is needed these will come forward individually as budget requests as they reach that point. The costs included in the action plan are based on 2023 pricing and thus should be considered indicative. Approving this plan therefore does not equate to approving funding for everything it contains.
 - 1.8 Likewise it is anticipated that there will be considerable member and stakeholder consultation on individual projects as they develop.
 - 1.9 To be clear not everything that is currently in scoping will be delivered, it is the normal course of project development that some initiatives are discovered to be undeliverable, or in need of rethinking... this is why we scope before we move to full delivery.
 - 1.10 It is also important to be clear that this plan considers the management and amenity of the beaches, it should not be confused with the Beach Management Plan work lead by the Engineering Project Manager, Tom Buxton Smith, which looks at the geomorphological management of beach levels, cliff erosion, and flood defence.
 - 1.11 The BADP has now been approved by the Overview Committee on 18/1/24 and recommended to go forward to cabinet.
 - 1.12 Overview also recommended that consideration be given to improving the process for applying for concessions and activities on EDDC managed beaches.
- 2 Recommendation
- Cabinet are asked to approve the Beach Amenity Development plan and its inclusion within Streetscene's green space plan.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications at this stage.

Legal implications:

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to the report.