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5 September 2014

## **S U M M O N S**

**MEETING:** Community Board  
**DATE:** 15 September 2014  
**TIME:** 6.00 pm  
**PLACE:** Council Chamber, Town Hall, Gosport  
**Democratic Services contact:** Vicki Stone

LINDA EDWARDS  
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

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### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Mayor (Councillor Gill) (ex officio)  
Chairman of P&O Board (Councillor Hook) (ex officio)

Councillor Burgess (Chairman)  
Councillor Dickson (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Bateman	Councillor Hazel
Councillor Mrs Batty	Councillor Mrs Hook
Councillor Mrs Cully	Councillor Hylands
Councillor Edgar	Councillor Mrs Morgan
Councillor Foster-Reed	Councillor Murphy

### **FIRE PRECAUTIONS**

(To be read by the Chairman if members of the public are present)

**In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the room immediately. Proceed downstairs by way of the main stairs or as directed by GBC staff, follow any of the emergency exit signs. People with disability or mobility issues please identify yourself to GBC staff who will assist in your evacuation of the building.**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

- If you are in a wheelchair or have difficulty in walking and require access to the Committee Room on the First Floor of the Town Hall for this meeting, assistance can be provided by Town Hall staff on request

If you require any of the services detailed above please ring the Direct Line for the Democratic Services Officer listed on the Summons (first page).

**NOTE:** Please note that mobile phones should be switched off or on silent for the duration of the meeting.

**AGENDA**

**PART A ITEMS**

RECOMMENDED  
MINUTE FORMAT

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

*All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any disclosable pecuniary interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.*

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD  
HELD ON 30 JUNE 2014

4. DEPUTATIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.5

*(NOTE: The Board is required to receive a deputation(s) on a matter which is before the meeting of the Board provided that notice of the intended deputation and its object shall have been received by the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Thursday, 11 September 2014. The total time for deputations in favour and against a proposal shall not exceed 10 minutes).*

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.6

*(NOTE: The Board is required to allow a total of 15 minutes for questions from Members of the public on matters within the terms of reference of the Board provided that notice of such Question(s) shall have been submitted to the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Thursday, 11 September 2014).*

6. ST VINCENT ROAD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT  
*Progress made in developing plans for the future of the St Vincent Road Bungalow Site.*

**Part II**  
Contact:  
Corinne  
Waterfield  
Ext 5372

7. NEW EXTRA CARE PROVISION  
*Providing details of a new build extra care scheme at Addenbrooke, Slocum House and Alec Rose House that has been proposed by Hampshire County Council. This proposal includes the demolition of Alec Rose and Slocum House and a 'right to return' for Council tenants that are affected.*

**Part II**  
Contact:  
Corinne  
Waterfield  
Ext 5372

8. ALVER VALLEY  
*To advise members of progress with a number of projects within the Alver Valley Country Park.*

**Part II**  
Contact:  
Ian Lycett  
Ext 5201

Community Board  
15 September 2014

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS

*-which the Chairman determines should be considered, by reason of special circumstances, as a matter of urgency.*

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

*That in relation to the following items the public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during these items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 1 of Part 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all circumstances of the cases, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.*

**PART B ITEMS  
FOLLOWING THE EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Item No.	Item	Paragraph no.3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act	
11.	External Painting and Communal Area Redecoration (Including Associated Repair Works) Contract 2014-2021	The Report includes information relating to the financial or business affairs of third party companies/bidders and therefore the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information	PART II Contact Officer Corinne Waterfield Ext 5372

**A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD  
WAS HELD 30 JUNE 2014 AT 6PM**

Chairman of the Policy and Organisation Board (Councillor Hook) (ex-officio) (P), Bateman (P), Mrs Batty (P), Burgess (P), Mrs Cully (P), Dickson (P), Edgar (P), Foster-Reed (P), Hazel, Mrs Hook (P), Hylands (P), Mrs Morgan (P), Murphy

It was reported that in accordance with Standing Order 2.3.6, Councillors Allen and Gill had been nominated to replace Councillors Hazel and Murphy for this meeting.

**7. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received from The Mayor, Councillors Murphy and Hazel.

**8. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD HELD ON 10 MARCH 2014, EXTRAORDINARY 9 APRIL 2014 AND 5 JUNE 2014**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meetings of the Community Board held on 10 March 2014, 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014 and 5 June 2014, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

**9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- Councillor Hook declared a non pecuniary interest in item 8, Gosport Music Festival 2014
- Councillor Mrs Hook declared a non pecuniary interest in item 8, Gosport Music Festival 2014
- Councillor Hylands declared a pecuniary interest in item 6, Environmental Health (Commercial) Service Plan 2014/15
- Councillor Foster-Reed declared a non pecuniary interest in item 8, Gosport Music Festival 2014

**10. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations.

**11. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

**PART II**

**12. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (COMMERCIAL) SERVICE PLAN 2014/15**

**Councillor Hylands declared a pecuniary interest in this item remained in the meeting room and took part in the discussion and voting thereon.**

Consideration was given to a report by the Housing Services Manager which advised Members of the requirement of the Food Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Executive respectively, that the work undertaken in the fields of Food Safety and Health and Safety at Work by and on behalf of the Council were adequately resourced and formally endorsed by the Council.

The report identified the work programme of the Environmental Health (Commercial) Team for the year 2014/2015 in relation to these services, to meet the above requirement and to satisfy agencies that adequate arrangements were in place at

Gosport Borough Council.

Members queried whether the Council had enough resources to fulfil their statutory requirements due to resource and staff reductions. It was explained that joint working with Fareham Borough Council meant that the partnership had shown significant improvement and efficiency whilst delivering the same quality of service.

It was noted that the number of urgent and major improvement ratings recorded to food businesses for the 2013/14 period had decreased, however it was felt by Members that food outlets scoring poor ratings should be displayed within the premises.

The Board were advised that although food outlets had been encouraged to display certificates and stickers showing food hygiene ratings there was currently no control over national legislation and no requirement for food businesses to display poor performance where consumers could easily view them. It was reported that food business ratings were published online at <http://ratings.food.gov.uk>.

It was suggested that a letter be sent to the Food Standards Government Agency requesting that they investigate the possibility of businesses with poor hygiene ratings displaying certificates of performance on premises for consumers to view.

In answer to a Members question, it was confirmed that it was the Council's policy to provide advice to food businesses, which was carried out during routine inspection visits and followed up in writing.

It was reported that no bacterial problems had been found in any water sampling of the Stokesbay splash park within 2013/14.

**RESOLVED:** That the Community Board approve:

- a) the Food Safety Service Plan 2014/15 as set out at Appendix A and;
- b) the Health and Safety Service Plan 2014/15 set out at Appendix B of this report

### **13. PROJECT INTEGRA DRAFT ACTION PLAN 2014-2017**

Consideration was given to a report from the Chief Executive seeking approval for the adoption of the Project Integra Draft Action Plan 2014-2017.

Members were advised that to implement the requirements of Hampshire's Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) a draft action plan was prepared annually. It was reported that all Partner Authorities at this present time were proposing to sign up to Project Integra.

Further to a Member's question it was confirmed that Gosport currently had no glass collection services however glass was collected through bottlebanks sited across the Borough and that ongoing investigations for door to door glass collection was being made.

**RESOLVED:** That the Community Board approve the adoption of the Project Integra Draft Action Plan 2014/2017.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Councillors Hook, Mrs Hook and Foster-Reed declared non pecuniary interests in this item left the meeting room and took no part in discussion or the voting thereon.**

Consideration was given to a late report from the Chief Executive advising Members of two requests for assistance from the Council for Music Festivals planned in July and August 2014.

Members were advised that Gosport Community Waterfront Festival Limited had approached Gosport Borough Council to ask for the hiring fee and the reinstatement deposit at Walpole Park to be waived. It was reported that the Gosport Community Waterfront Festival Limited was a new company comprising four directors.

Members were further advised that, in respect of Gosport Festivals Limited who were the organisers of the 2013 Festival at Walpole Park, a request had been received that Gosport Borough Council waived the requirement of a reinstatement deposit.

Members were advised that both Gosport Community Waterfront Festival Limited and Gosport Festivals Limited had indicated that any reinstatement works that were required after the event would be carried out and that a contract agreement would be in place detailing the responsibility of the reinstatement works.

Further to a Member's question it was confirmed that the organiser of each event was required to pay a fee to the Performing Rights Society of which a deposit would be taken before a license was issued.

**RESOLVED: That**

- i. The Board approves the hiring of Walpole Park for music festivals on the 18<sup>th</sup> July – 20<sup>th</sup> July and 7<sup>th</sup> August – 10<sup>th</sup> August 2014.
- ii. In respect of Gosport Community Waterfront Festival Limited, the Board approves:
  - a) The designation of the planned event as a community event under the Council's Fees & Charges
  - b) The waiving of the hiring fee and requirement for a reinstatement deposit for Walpole Park for the period Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2014 until Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2014 inclusive; and
  - c) The Council enter into a licence agreement with Gosport Community Waterfront Festival Limited on terms agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Borough Solicitor and Deputy Chief Executive
- iii. In respect of Gosport Festivals Limited, the Board approves:
  - a) The designation of the planned event as a community event under the Council's Fees & Charges,
  - b) The waiving of the requirement for a reinstatement deposit for Walpole Park for the period Monday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2014 until Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2014 inclusive; and
  - c) The Council enter into a licence agreement with Gosport Community Festival Limited on terms agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Borough Solicitor & Deputy Chief Executive.

The meeting concluded at: 6.45pm

CHAIRMAN

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 06

<b>Board/Committee</b>	COMMUNITY BOARD
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 SEPTEMBER 2014
<b>Title:</b>	ST VINCENT ROAD DEVELOPMENT
<b>Author:</b>	HOUSING SERVICES MANAGER
<b>Status:</b>	FOR DECISION

### **Purpose**

This report outlines the progress made in developing plans for the future of the St Vincent Road Bungalow Site..

### **Recommendation**

The Community Board agrees:

- a) To waive Section 8.1; 9; 11; and 13 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules
- b) To appoint First Wessex as Project Manager and to the procurement of the professional team and building contractor being undertaken as set out in Paragraph 2.5 of this report.
- c) To provide up to 18 houses on the site

### **1.0      Background**

- 1.1      The Community Board considered a report on the St Vincent Road Bungalow site at its meeting on 9 April 2014 and agreed the proposal to provide 16 2 bedroom houses on the site.

### **2.0      Report**

#### **2.1      Project Management**

Following the decision in April Officers contacted 3 of the Council's RP partners who are currently or have recently developed affordable housing in the Borough. The advantage of working with an RP is that they are familiar with the latest build standards for affordable housing; the requirements of tenants of affordable housing; and the management issues faced by a Social Landlord.

- 2.2      The proposal is for the RP to project manage the development of the site including procuring and managing the professional team, advising on the specification for the houses, carrying out further financial appraisals and assisting in the procurement of and then managing the building contractor. The RP would hand the houses over to the Council in a turnkey condition so that they may be let immediately.



- 2.3 It is proposed to appoint First Wessex (FW) to fulfil the project management role. First Wessex has a number of framework agreements, which have been subject to public procurement, in place from which the professional team and building contractor would be selected.
- 2.4 FW has considerable experience of developing affordable housing sites in the Borough and in the Hampshire area. They are currently delivering affordable housing as part of the Rowner Regeneration Project and also the former Married Quarters site at Lee on the Solent.
- 2.5 It is proposed to appoint FW to Project Manage the delivery of the houses and to appoint the professional team and building contractor from FW's relevant framework agreements. FW will arrange the appointment of a building contractor through a competitive selection process from within the Framework. Officers would make the final decision on the specification for the houses, appointment of the professional team and building contractor. To effect this proposal it will be necessary to waive the requirements of Sections 8.1; 9; 11; and 13 Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

### **Layout**

- 2.6 Further work has recently been undertaken on the layout of the houses. A revised proposal will be made available at the meeting.
- 2.7 It is proposed to finalise the proposal and hold an open day at the site in October so that the planning application may be submitted October/November. The application to stop up the highway will be made at the same time.
- 2.8 It is anticipated that works will start on site March 2015 with a build programme of a year.

### **Next steps**

- 2.9 Following the Board's approval the detailed design and specification will be finalised. Following the open day an application for planning permission will be submitted late summer 2014.

## **3.0 Risk Assessment**

- 3.1 The overall project risks will be identified and mitigated where possible through the detailed risk management plan to be developed with the FW as project manager.
- 3.2 FW and the Council will be undertaking further financial appraisals and it is important to progress the development as quickly as possible to avoid repaying retained capital receipts from right to buy schemes to Central Government.

- 3.3 There is a low risk that the application to stop up some or all of the highway to be built upon may not be granted which would mean that the amount of land which may be developed is reduced.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 This is an exciting opportunity to deliver 16 new affordable homes in Gosport for households on the housing register.

<b>Financial Services comments:</b>	Provisions for the costs of working up the development of this project have been included in the HRA budget.
<b>Legal Services comments:</b>	Contained in the report
<b>Crime and Disorder:</b>	The proposal enables the development of new homes which will offer a safe and secure environment for residents.
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	none
<b>Service Improvement Plan implications:</b>	The delivery of new homes is identified as a SIP action.
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The delivery of new homes is identified as a key activity under the People theme.
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	See paragraph 3 of the report
<b>Background papers:</b>	Report to Community Board 9 April 2014
<b>Appendices/Enclosures:</b>	
<b>Report author/ Lead Officer:</b>	Corinne Waterfield

## AGENDA ITEM NO.07

<b>Board/Committee:</b>	Community Board
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 September 2014
<b>Title:</b>	New Extra Care Provision
<b>Author:</b>	Housing Services Manager
<b>Status:</b>	FOR DECISION

### **Purpose**

This report provides details of a new build extra care scheme at Addenbrooke, Slocum House and Alec Rose House that has been proposed by Hampshire County Council. This proposal includes the demolition of Alec Rose and Slocum House and a 'right to return' for Council tenants that are affected.

### **Recommendation**

The Community Board:

- a) Agrees that the Housing Services Manager in consultation with the Chairman of Community Board continues working on the detailed proposals for the redevelopment of the Addenbrooke / Slocum / Alec Rose House site to deliver an Extra Care Housing Scheme.
- b) Agrees that this approval is subject to a suitable right to return scheme for existing tenants as outlines in paragraph 2.4.

## **1      Background**

- 1.1 Hampshire County Council (HCC) has a medium term objective of developing two extra care schemes per Borough to meet the needs of an aging population. Extra care housing is assisted living for older people. Each resident has their own front door, one or two bedrooms a living room, kitchen and bathroom. Residents will have a range of support and care needs. There will be a dedicated care team available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- 1.2 Gosport already has a popular extra care scheme at Juniper Court, Bridgemary managed by GuinnessHermitage Housing Association.
- 1.3 HCC have identified the site at the now decommissioned Addenbrooke Residential Care Home site at Willis Road, which is in their ownership, for the provision of an additional extra care scheme to meet their objective of providing two new schemes in each Borough in Hampshire. They have also identified that there is the opportunity to increase the number of properties that are provided on the site by incorporating Gosport Borough Council owned land within their proposal. This would result in greater cost effectiveness.

## 2 **Report**

- 2.1 HCC have identified the Addenbooke site as a suitable location to develop an extra care scheme to meet their aspirations of providing two schemes per Borough. This site has been assessed using a standard assessment method as being well located to form part of the local community for older people, allowing access to the community for potential residents and allowing the scheme to act as a 'hub' for activities and support for older people living in the wider area.
- 2.2 Initial indications show that an extra care scheme on the Addenbrooke site alone would result in a scheme of approximately 43 units. The minimum threshold for a viable scheme has been assessed as being 42 units. With the addition of the GBC land the scheme would deliver in the region of 92 units.
- 2.3 HCC will carry out a competition using a procurement framework of Registered Providers (RP) selected as extra care providers by HCC. The design will be developed by the winning RP and will be subject to the usual planning process and approvals.
- 2.4 This proposal includes giving existing Gosport Borough Council tenants from Slocum House and Alec Rose House the right to return to the new properties. The returning tenants would be charged same rent/service charges that they currently pay. Any future increases in rent would be pegged for the duration of the tenancy to Council rent increases. A decant scheme would also be offered to those existing tenants who do not wish to move into the extra care scheme.
- 2.5 The proposal would also necessitate the demolition of the Club Hampshire facility adjacent to Slocum House. There are currently activities run for older people by BrendonCare offering around 10 sessions of a variety of activities each week. HCC have committed to ensure that any new extra care scheme includes sufficient communal facilities to enable existing activities for older people to continue, or possibly expanded. If this report is agreed discussions between BrendonCare and HCC will be arranged.
- 2.6 **Identification of Need**  
Extra care housing is primarily targeted at the over 75's, although it is accessible to those over 55 with a social care need. In Gosport it is predicted that 10.07% of the population will be over 75 by 2017 which equates to over 8,300 people. Gosport has one of the highest concentrations of older people receiving care in the County.
- 2.7 **Existing Tenants**  
There are currently 34 properties at Slocum House and Alec Rose House with 40 residents. Residents are likely to benefit from the

improved housing and support that will be available at the same costs that they currently pay, with 31 being over 70, and 23 having existing support needs currently.

Tenants have been advised that this proposal is being considered, and further consultation will be undertaken regularly by all parties. It is intended to arrange for the residents to visit an extra care scheme in Hampshire as part of this consultation.

## **2.8 Financial Arrangements**

The development of this proposed extra care scheme is an opportunity to attract additional investment into the Borough. This scheme is likely to cost between £14 million and £17million. This will be funded in the main by the successful housing association partner who will raise funds to invest against future rental income. The remaining costs will be borne by Hampshire County Council with the potential for some funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

Gosport Borough Council will not be required to find any capital funding for the project. Subject to Board approval it is intended that GBC will receive around £600,000 to cover the cost of the loans that were raised in respect of these properties when self-financing was introduced in 2012-13. This is equivalent to the debt that was incurred for these units.

HCC have agreed that they will include as a condition of the proposal which must be met that any existing Council tenants must have the right to be allocated one of the new properties in the extra care scheme at the same rent and service charge that they currently have (subject to annual Gosport Borough Council rent increases.)

The scheme would be constructed in two phases, with the first phase being constructed on the Addenbooke site. This would enable the existing Council tenants to remain in their existing homes until phase 1 is complete. Slocum House and Alec Rose House tenants would then move into phase 1 of the development. This would avoid the necessity of a double move for residents. Once the moves are completed, phase two, the redevelopment of Slocum House and Alec Rose House, would commence.

It is anticipated that if Slocum House and Alec Rose House were to be retained within the Council's ownership the amount of capital investment that would be required to enable them to be maintained at the current standard would be around £440,000. In addition a further £100,000 to £150,000 is identified for refurbishment of the schemes to improve the standard in line with the existing sheltered housing refurbishment programme.

Investigations are being carried out to establish the position with regard to Home Loss payments. If Home Loss payments are necessary HCC have confirmed that these will be considered within the total scheme costs. There are also likely to be increased numbers of voids at Alec Rose / Slocum House during the transitional period. This will be minimised as far as possible.

## 2.9 **Timescale for the proposal**

If the recommendations are approved it is anticipated that it would take HCC around 6 months to identify an RP partner, and a further 9 months to secure planning permission, with phase one of the building (which would include around 70% of the flats) being completed around January 2017 and phase two by January 2018.

## 3 **Risk Assessment**

3.1 The risks associated with this proposal include:

- Obtaining funding for the scheme from the Homes and Communities Agency (low risk)
- Concerns of the local residents and finding suitable alternatives for those who do not wish to exercise their right to return (medium risk)
- Local objections and failure to gain planning approval for the scheme (medium risk)

3.2 The risk of not progressing this proposal is that Gosport Borough Council will miss the opportunity to attract external funding for the delivery of an exemplar extra care scheme in the Borough. The condition of the Council owned schemes at Slocum House and Alec Rose House is such that whilst it is still of an acceptable standard there would be a need for significant (quantify) capital expenditure to bring them up to an equivalent standard to that of the newly refurbished schemes in the Council's ownership.

## 4 **Conclusion**

4.1 This report sets out a proposal from Hampshire CC for the development of a new build extra care scheme at the site of Addenbrooke House and Slocum House and Alec Rose House with an indication of Gosport Borough Council's position of this scheme were to be pursued.

<b>Financial Services comments:</b>	Contained within the report.
<b>Legal Services comments:</b>	Contained within the report.
<b>Crime and Disorder:</b>	The proposal enables the development of new homes which will offer a safe and secure environment to older residents
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	The proposed provision will provide good quality homes for older people.

<b>Service Improvement Plan implications:</b>	The delivery of new homes is identifies as a SIP action
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The delivery of new homes is identified as a key activity under the people theme.
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	See paragraph 3 of the report
<b>Background papers:</b>	none
<b>Appendices/Enclosures:</b>	none

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 08

<b>Board/Committee:</b>	COMMUNITY BOARD
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 SEPTEMBER 2014
<b>Title:</b>	ALVER VALLEY COUNTRY PARK
<b>Author:</b>	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
<b>Status:</b>	FOR DECISION/ FOR RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY & ORGANISATION BOARD

### **Purpose**

To advise members of progress with a number of projects within the Alver Valley Country Park.

### **Recommendation**

Members note the progress being made with projects in the Alver Valley Country Park.

#### **1 Background**

- 1.1 The Community Board considered a report on the Alver Valley Country Park on the 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014.
- 1.2 The report and a masterplan for the Country Park, were both approved and set out a number of actions designed to raise the profile of the Alver Valley Country Park and to encourage more residents and visitors to use the Park.
- 1.3 Officers are progressing these actions and a number of land issues will be reported to the Economic Development Board in November.
- 1.4 The Alver Valley Country Park has been identified by both the Solent Local Enterprise partnership (SLEP) and the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) as a green open space of sub-regional importance.
- 1.5 Officers have been pursuing funding opportunities from both organisations in connection with possible and appropriate projects within the Alver Valley. Priority will be given by both organisations to those projects that encourage use of the Park by residents, particularly dog walkers, and reduce the number of possible visits to the sensitive coastal areas whose habitats Natural England have identified as vulnerable to increasing usage.

#### **2 River Alver**

- 2.1 Officers have been in discussions for some time with The Environment Agency (EA) regarding improvements to the water quality of the River Alver.



- 2.2 A significant problem for the river is the regular blockage of the river's outfall at Stokes Bay. The long-shore drift from West to East of the shingle constantly blocks the outfall causing the River Alver to flood. This is a particular problem in stormy weather. The flooding reduces the quality of the river water to the detriment of the fish, vertebrates, etc in the river.
- 2.3 The EA have commissioned a study of the problem to find a long-term solution. The study recognised that any permanent solution to this problem would require returning the river to its original course along Stokes Bay, with discharge into the Solent occurring near to Gilkicker Point. This is unlikely to be feasible and would be extremely costly.
- 2.4 The recommended solution to the outfall problem is therefore to clear a significant amount of shingle surrounding the outfall on an annual basis rather than to provide a number of re-active small clearances.
- 2.5 The proposal is to remove sufficient shingle to ensure the outfall remains free throughout the year. The shingle will be placed approximately 500 metres to the East of the outfall on Stokes Bay. This additional shingle will protect this area of sea defence which is continually being undermined and causing damage to the promenade and road. It is hoped that the annual deposit of shingle here should ensure that the sea defences only require maintenance in the future.
- 2.6 The EA have costed this work and are preparing the applications for the appropriate licences and for planning approval. The cost of works will be £21,000 and the EA have asked if the Council will contribute £7,000 towards this proposal. If the proposal proves successful the EA will fund future annual shingle clearances which are estimated to be in the region of £14,000/£15,000.
- 2.7 Members will be aware that the Council Countryside Officers have been working closely on a project to improve the water quality of the River Alver by adding new areas of reed bed within the Alver Valley Country Park. The EA are delighted with the results and the work of our Countryside team and volunteers, who cleared and planted the new beds.
- 2.8 The EA have now allocated a further £23,000 towards improving the river water quality and Countryside officers are in discussions with both the EA and Natural England to agree how this funding will be spent.

### **3 Stokes Bay/Apple Dumpling Bridge footpath**

- 3.1 Officers have submitted a bid to the PUSH green infrastructure fund to create a footpath linking Stokes Bay to Apple Dumpling Bridge.

The footpath will run from Browndown Road to Apple Dumpling Bridge alongside the River Alver and will encourage families and dog walkers to enter the country park from Stokes Bay and reduce the footfall along the ecologically sensitive coastal routes. The project will also include the installation of some “dog dipping” areas along the river where dogs can swim safely.

- 3.2 The PUSH Joint Committee meet on 23 September 2014 and will consider a recommendation from the Green Infrastructure Group to award Gosport £50,000 towards this project.
- 3.3 The proposal has been costed at £78,000. If the PUSH funding is approved, works must be completed by 31 March 2015 and tenders have been requested with a view to commencing the works as soon as possible.

#### **4 Western Gateway**

- 4.1 The Alver Valley Country Park Masterplan recognises the need to improve the gateways to the Country Park and the first of these identified for improvement was the entrance from Cherque Way (Western Gateway).
- 4.2 Officers have revised the design for the new entrance and car-park from Cherque Way and the works are estimated to be £173,000. This will include the provision of the car-park and access road interpretation; landscaping and biodiversity improvements
- 4.3 Hampshire County Council has indicated a willingness to support this project and has advised that they will provide £50,000 towards the cost.
- 4.4 Further funding of £123,000 will, therefore, be required for the Project. A provision has already been made in the revised capital programme for this.

#### **5 Eastern Gateway**

- 5.1 An Eastern Gateway is proposed from Grange Road, adjacent to the materials recycling facility and the BMX track. The proposal would include a new and improved car-park; and access; interpretation and landscaping including a picnic area and biodiversity improvements.
- 5.2 Negotiations are currently underway with the BMX Club officials and British Cycling (BC) regarding improvements to the BMX track and facilities to ensure it remains a track of National significance.
- 5.3 It is hoped that a combined project can be agreed with the BMX Club and the BC that both delivers the improvement to the BMX facility and the creation of the Eastern Gateway to the Country Park.

External funding opportunities are being considered.

- 5.4 Provisional costings suggest the car-park/access etc would cost in the region of £180,000.
- 5.5 A fully costed proposal will be the subject of a further report to this Board.

## **6 Baseline Surveys**

- 6.1 The Alver Valley Country Park has been named as a pilot project to demonstrate how a “Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space” can mitigate recreational disturbance of other more ecologically sensitive areas (Special Protection Areas).
- 6.2 As part of this pilot it is important that appropriate base line evidence is collected so that the effectiveness of the mitigation measures and improvements to access and facilities in the Country Park can be measured in respect of visitor numbers and type of visitor.
- 6.3 Electronic visitor counters have been installed within the Country Park to measure visitor numbers. However, it is considered that further survey evidence is required both on the Alver Valley Country Park and on other Special Protection Areas sites to establish the effectiveness and awareness of the Alver Valley Country Park.
- 6.4 The undertaking of such a survey and its analysis could cost approximately £7,000.

## **7 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The revised capital programme currently has £164,000 allocated to the Alver Valley Country Park, of which approximately £1,500 has already been spent.
- 7.2 The following projects are being funded from the Capital programme:

Alver River Shingle Clearance	£7,000
Stokes Bay/Apple Dumpling Bridge Footpath	£28,000
Western Gateway car-park etc. (£50,000 from HCC)	£122,000

7.3 This will leave £5,500 within the 2014/15 revised capital programme for the Alver Valley.

7.4 Officers have recently contributed towards a joint bid to the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (SLEP) from the Solent Recreation & Mitigation Partnership for projects within the Country Park:

This will include contributions towards the Eastern Gateway and further survey works.

## **8 Risk Assessment**

8.1 The Council's Partners are helping to fund a number of projects and the Shingle clearance and the footpath construction can proceed within the current capital programme. The £50,000 funding from PUSH must be spent by the 31 March 2015 but officers are prepared for this and tenders are already underway.

8.2 The Western Gateway has been designed by Council officers and will be also supervised by Council officers. Risks to this Council will be minimised by the normal contract procedures and requirements. Final confirmation of the HCC funding is expected before the end of September.

## **9 Conclusion**

9.1 It is important that this Council begins the further developments of the Alver Valley Country Park to encourage more visitors and to take advantage of external funding opportunities.

9.2 The prevention of flooding by the River Alver and the consequential improvements of the water quality within the river will help increase the biodiversity of the Country Park. The proposed linkage with Stokes Bay will encourage dog walkers and families to enter the Country Park from the South along a river walk.

9.3 The improvement to both the Eastern and Western Gateways will encourage more visits to the Country Park from both residents and those living in the sub-region. The Council will continue to work closely with Partners to improve the attractiveness of the Country Park.

<b>Financial Services comments:</b>	As covered in Section 7.0
<b>Legal Services comments:</b>	None for the purpose of this Report.
<b>Crime and Disorder:</b>	The Country Park will provide opportunities for diversional activities.
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	The Country Park is being designed to ensure it is accessible and welcoming to everyone within the community.
<b>Service Improvement Plan implications:</b>	The Projects within this report are within the Service Plan.
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The Alver Valley Country Park is a Corporate Priority.
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	As Section 8.0
<b>Background papers:</b>	Nil
<b>Appendices/Enclosures:</b>	Nil
<b>Report author/ Lead Officer:</b>	Ian Lycett, Chief Executive