

River Wensum Strategy Update
Report by Vice-Chairman

Summary: Following on the report from the Senior Waterways and Recreation Officer on March 2, this report provides another update on progress by the River Wensum Strategy Partnership.

Recommendation: That members note the content of the report.

1 Background

- 1.1 Not to repeat too much of Adrian's last report, it is still worth reminding members that the River Wensum Strategy (RWS) is being developed by a Partnership consisting of Norwich City Council, the Broads Authority, Norfolk County Council, the Environment Agency and the Wensum River Parkway Partnership. Its purpose is to deliver a strong vision for the future of the river corridor within the City Council's boundary and Whitlingham Country Park to maximise potential for regeneration, in particular by: encouraging greater access to, and activity on the river; improving its environment, heritage and biodiversity value; stimulating appropriate development including leisure and business opportunities; also addressing social inequalities where relevant.
- 1.2 The strategy will consist of a set of integrated proposals to cover a period of approximately ten years. These projects will be included in a **strategy plan** and those deemed deliverable in the short to medium term will also be included in an **action plan**. Work is in progress to identify these projects.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 As reported previously, the RWS will also provide public clarification about who does what, also what powers the individual partner authorities have. Businesses, organisations, boatowners and members of the public will be signposted to relevant organisations and service areas for a range of functions including planning, navigation, property management, flood risk management, angling, boat mooring, biodiversity, ecology, water supply, leisure and tourism and maintenance of the riverside walk and open spaces.

3 Delivery

- 3.1 The RWS will propose a delivery body: i.e. a structure to deliver individual projects, oversee and monitor progress and identify and bid for funding. The development of a costed and feasible set of projects, agreed by all partner

authorities, will make it easier to mount bids for Community Infrastructure Levy cash and other sources of external and partnership funding.

- 3.2 Work on individual projects is in progress. Individual Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) are being drawn up for a series of projects. These PIDs include feasibility assessments, cost estimates and likely sources of funding. A full list of projects will be included in the **action plan** published as part of the strategy document.
- 3.3 Thanks to Broads Authority expertise, an interactive map is nearly complete which will plot existing and potential river usage e.g. sites for moorings, angling, biodiversity enhancement and all proposed projects. This will be placed on the RWS webpage when consultation starts.
- 3.1.1 The structure of the report itself is being finalised. Each of the major partners has contributed individually themed chapters – the Environment Agency, for example, writes on biodiversity and the ecosystem, the County Council on general access, footpaths and the Riverside Walk and the Broads Authority (i.e. Adrian) on leisure – though we are still debating on his title, since most of his proposals relate more to practical activity access, moorings and small craft launch points.
- 3.1.2 Before the strategy document goes out for public consultation the RWS team will consult major stakeholders (e.g. the Cathedral, Great Hospital, Jarrolds, anglers, the Broads Society and of course the Broads Local Access Forum). Due to the complexity of the work the timetable for this has slipped slightly, and the consultation is now likely to take place towards the end of the year. If members wish to be consulted in advance of the public consultation, it may be necessary to call a special BLAF meeting.

Background papers: Nil

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Appendices: Nil