

## DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	COUNCIL	17 JULY 2017	21
<b>AREA CONSERVATION RANGER POST AND COASTAL IMPROVEMENTS - SECTION 106 FUNDING</b>			

### PUBLIC ITEM

#### SUMMARY

Further to the closure and demolition of the former Pontins holiday park site, Persimmon Homes acquired the land from Northern Trust and submitted a planning application 16/0062 in January 2016 to develop 353 residential properties. During the application assessment stage, the proposed development was ruled significant in terms of Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, as it was likely to have impact on the Ribble and Alt Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), RAMSAR site and Site of Special Scientific Interest, located along Fylde's coastline.

Planning permission was issued on the 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 on the agreement that the developer would make a Section 106 payment to fund a series of agreed measures to mitigate the increased ecological and recreational pressures on the SPA zone. These measures were detailed within a mitigation report, produced by the Parks and Coastal Services Manager.

Two key measures were proposed. Firstly, the appointment of a new 5 year fixed-term Area Conservation Ranger post. Secondly, the delivery of coastal improvement schemes focussed on habitat management, visitor management and community engagement. The proposals were subject to consultation and were approved by Natural England, Environment Agency, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Blackpool Council, forming part of the final Section 106 Agreement.

This report provides details of the project background and process for delivery as well as a cost breakdown for the scheme.

The Area Conservation Ranger post and Coastal Improvements scheme was considered by the Tourism & Leisure Committee at the meeting of 22nd June 2017.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

##### The Council is recommended to:

1. To approve of a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £214,000 (split between the years 2017/18 to 2021/22) to be met in full from the Section 106 developer contribution relating to the former Pontins holiday park site in the same amount, as recommended by the Tourism & Leisure Committee at the meeting of 22nd June 2017; and
2. To approve a fully-funded increase to the Capital Programme scheme for vehicle replacement for 2017/18 in the sum of £11,000 to be met in full from the Section 106 developer contribution relating to the former Pontins holiday park site in the same amount in respect of the Area Conservation Ranger vehicle purchase costs, also as recommended by the Tourism & Leisure Committee at the meeting of 22nd June 2017.

## SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

### Planning Committee 11 January 2017:

Planning Committee approved application 16/0062.

The Committee considered the report of Mark Evans (Head of Planning and Regeneration) which set out the various planning applications. A copy of the Late Observation Schedule was circulated at the meeting.

Following detailed consideration of each application, it was RESOLVED to decide the applications as stated in the schedule attached.

*Full Planning Permission : Delegated to Officers*

*The decision on the application be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration and subject to:*

*15. Natural England support for an Appropriate Assessment in respect of the ecological matters and the proposed mitigation*

*16. the completion of a Section 106 agreement in order to secure necessary infrastructure works*

*17. a series of planning conditions*

### Tourism & Leisure Committee 22 June 2017, after considering it was RESOLVED

1. To recommend to Full Council approval of a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £214,000 (split between the years 2017/18 to 2021/22) to be met in full from the Section 106 developer contribution relating to the former Pontins holiday park site in the same amount;

2. To recommend to Full Council approval of a fully-funded increase to the Capital Programme scheme for vehicle replacement for 2017/18 in the sum of £11,000 to be met in full from the Section 106 developer contribution relating to the former Pontins holiday park site in the same amount in respect of the Area Conservation Ranger vehicle purchase costs; and

3. To authorise the proposed expenditure in respect of the scheme in the total sum of £225,000 as detailed within this report. The funding will be used to recruit a fixed term Area Conservation Ranger, vehicle purchase, on-going transport costs and environmental project costs to facilitate the delivery of a range of coastal improvements as detailed in the SPA Mitigation report.

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services ( <b>Value for Money</b> )	√
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council ( <b>Clean and Green</b> )	√
Working with all partners ( <b>Vibrant Economy</b> )	√
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live ( <b>A Great Place to Live</b> )	√
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit ( <b>A Great Place to Visit</b> )	√

## BACKGROUND

1. Planning application no. 16/0062 was submitted by Persimmon Homes in January 2016 to develop 353 residential properties on the former Pontins Holiday Camp site. The Appropriate Assessment outlined that development was ruled significant in terms of Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, as it was likely to have impact on the Ribble and Alt Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), RAMSAR site and Site of Special Scientific Interest, located along Fylde's coastline. Natural England advised that Fylde Council, under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations, should have regard for any potential impacts that the residential development would have.
2. Officer from the Planning Department and the Parks and Coastal Service produced a Habitat Regulations Assessment and a SPA Mitigation report to outline the potential recreational pressures and disturbance that would be caused by the residential development on the coastline environment. Officers also submitted

recommendations to mitigate and reduce the environmental impact, including the creation of an Area Conservation Ranger post, habitat management proposals, improved access and increased interpretation.

3. The mitigation proposals were subject to consultation and approved by Natural England, Environment Agency, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Blackpool Council, and are now included in the final Section 106 Agreement. The Section 106 Agreement stipulates that the developer will pay Fylde Council £225,000 to fund an Area Conservation Ranger and associated transport costs to deliver a range of coastal improvements for 5 years.
4. A total Section 106 sum of £225,000 is to be paid to Fylde Council on commencement of the second residential development. Verbal confirmation has been given by the developer that building works on the second phase are due to start imminently.

#### PROJECT OUTLINE

5. A full time Area Conservation Ranger will be employed on a 5 year fixed term contract, within the Parks and Coastal Services team once the Section 106 monies are released. This is anticipated to be August 2017. The new Conservation Ranger will be based at Snowdon Road Depot and will report to the Senior Coast and Conservation Officer. This post will form part of the new Coast & Conservation Ranger team.
6. The Conservation Ranger will deliver a range of outputs to minimise environmental disturbance from the residential development as detailed in the agreed mitigation measures. The Ranger will operate during the first critical years of the Persimmon Homes residential development and will be responsible in educating and influencing responsible behaviour of residents and visitors. A job description and person specification for the post have been prepared which fully detail the purpose and full range of duties and responsibilities of the role.
7. The main responsibilities of the Area Conservation Ranger post are:
  - To support the Senior Coast and Conservation Officer in the protection and maintenance of Fylde Council's coastal and environmental assets.
  - To protect and improve the nature conservation interest of coastal and soft sea defence habitats through practical environmental improvement projects.
  - To encourage public appreciation of the coastal environment by contributing to a programme of outdoor events, environmental education and volunteer programmes such as Beach Wardens.
  - To integrate with the new residential community and encourage positive behaviour and usage of the dunes and beach areas.
  - To improve the marketing and promotion of the coastal assets
8. Coastal improvements will include:
  - Improved interpretation, signage and way marking
  - Improved access through defined entrances and walk ways
  - Dune stabilization works adjacent Clifton Drive North
  - Habitat Protection and Conservation
  - Improvements to the Visitor Centre
  - Delivery of environmental projects as listed in the Dunes Management Plan

#### PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN

<b>SECTION 106 FUNDED AREA CONSERVATION RANGER AND COSTAL IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
<b>CAPITAL COSTS</b>	
Purchase of Vehicle	Year 1 2017/18 - £11,000
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL COSTS £11,000</b>	
<b>REVENUE COSTS</b>	

Staffing and Operational Costs	Year 1 2017/18 - £26,740 Year 2 2018/19 - £27,775 Year 3 2019/ 20 - £28,841 Year 4 2020/ 21 - £30,129 Year 5 2021/22 - £30,515 <b>TOTAL: £ 144,000</b>
Vehicle Running Costs	Year 1 2017/18 - £6,000 Year 2 2018/19 - £6,000 Year 3 2019/ 20 - £6,000 Year 4 2020/ 21 - £6,000 Year 5 2021/22 - £6,000 <b>TOTAL: £ 30,000</b>
Environmental Projects	Year 1 2017/18 - £20,000 Year 2 2018/19 - £20,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE COSTS £214,000</b>	

## 9. OBJECTIVES, OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Corporate priority: Green and Clean

- Effective delivery of the Fylde Coastal Strategy.
- Ensure beaches and bathing waters are clean and safe.
- Ensure the security of the coastal defences.

Corporate priority: A Great Place to Live

- Support and promote volunteers' efforts to improve their local community.
- Deliver activities for all age groups.
- Recognise the significance of our heritage assets.
- Work with partners to improve health and wellbeing of all residents.

Corporate priority: A Great Place to Visit

- Maximise the natural assets of our coast and countryside by improving their facilities.
- Provide a positive first impression of Fylde.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The Council are recommended to approve: - a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £214,000 (split between the years 2017/18 to 2021/22); and - a fully-funded increase to the Capital Programme scheme for vehicle replacement for 2017/18 in the sum of £11,000, Both to be met in full from the Section 106 developer contribution relating to the former Pontins holiday park site in the same amounts.
Legal	No implications arising from this report.
Community Safety	The project will ensure the long term protection and management of Fylde's sand dunes as a soft sea defence and mitigate the environmental impact of the new residential development.
Human Rights and Equalities	No implications arising from this report.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	This project will ensure medium and long term protection, improvement and promotion of Fylde's coastline environment.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No implications arising from this report.

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Planning Committee Report	11 January 2017	<a href="#">S:\Committee Documents\Reports Archive\Planning\2016-17\2017-01-11</a>
Tourism & Leisure Committee Minutes	22 June 2017	<a href="#">Tourism &amp; Leisure Committee Minutes</a>