

## **REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**8 DECEMBER 2022**

### **RIVER STRATEGY PROGRESS UPDATE**

Report from: Richard Hicks, Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive

Author: Peter Garrett, Greenspace and Access Programme Manager

#### Summary

This report provides an update and presentation on the SQW commission to produce a River Strategy and to consider progress so far.

1. Budget and policy framework
  - 1.1. Work on the production of a River Strategy is being completed as part of a suite of strategies associated with Medway 2037.
2. Background
  - 2.1. Over the last two decades Medway Council has produced a number of strategies associated with the River Medway.
  - 2.2. SQW were commissioned in October 2021 to produce an updated River Strategy that would include a review of what had been produced before and also a comprehensive assessment of current issues and opportunities associated with the both the River Medway and the Borough's Thames frontage.
  - 2.3. It is anticipated that the strategy's cross cutting themes will influence many areas of the Council's service delivery as well as acting as a focus for all partners and stakeholders associated with the rivers running through and bordering the Borough.
  - 2.4. A story board of progress so far is attached as Appendix 1.

### 3. Options

- 3.1. There are no options to consider at this stage. Members' comments are sought on the emerging River Strategy.

### 4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1. Members are requested to note progress so far and provide comment and guidance that may continue to influence the production of the River Strategy.

### 5. Risk management

- 5.1. There are no risks to be considered at this stage.

### 6. Consultation

- 6.1. Appendix 1 includes organisations, stakeholders and individuals seen so far, those that have been approached and are yet to be met and a number of other possible consultees. Members may wish to consider who else may be included in the consultation phase of the strategy.

### 7. Climate change implications

- 7.1. One of the key themes that will be included will be the River's important role to play in Medway's climate change agenda and will include the threats from issues such as sea level rises and also opportunities for carbon storage, enhancing biodiversity and green energy.

### 8. Financial implications

- 8.1. There are no financial implications at this stage of the work.

### 9. Legal implications

- 9.1. There are no legal implications at this stage of the work.

### 10. Recommendations

- 10.1. It is recommended that the Committee notes progress on the River Strategy.

## Lead officer contact

Peter Garrett, Greenspace and Access Programme Manager, Mobile 07970344212,  
Regeneration Delivery, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4TR

## Appendices

Appendix 1 – Story Board of progress so far

## Background papers

None.