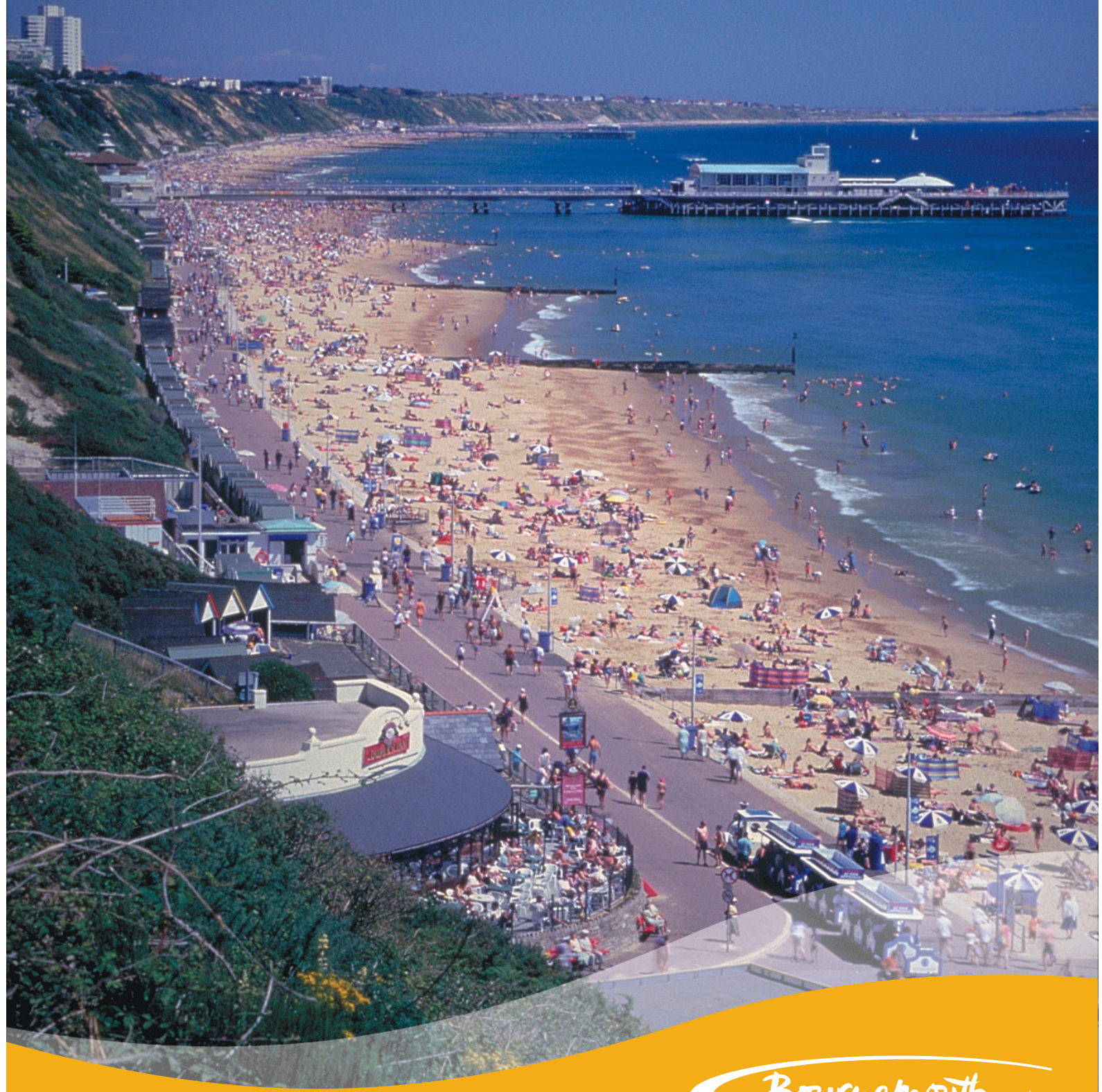


Leisure Services

Seafront Strategy 2007 - 2011



Foreword

*By Councillor Bronwen Littlewood,
Cabinet Member for Environment &
Leisure
December 2006*



"This document sets out a vision for the future management and development of our award winning seafront over the next five years. It is an essential tool guiding internal and external investment as we seek to build on our reputation as one of the UK's premier beaches through economically and environmentally sustainable policies and practices. It is a bold and ambitious document that tackles some major challenges, such as climate change, and I have no hesitation in supporting it."

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1.0 Context

Our five and a half miles of seafront cliffs, promenades, beaches and facilities form the prized jewel in the crown of Bournemouth's century-long reign as one of Britain's premier tourist resorts.

Today, 5.2 million UK, European and global visitors arrive in the town every year, drawn primarily by the magnificent sweep of Poole Bay. Bournemouth seafront lives large in the imagination of the public as the quintessential British beach. No other beach in the UK draws so many visitors.

Our seafront is also an extremely important public leisure and recreational amenity for local residents in the Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch conurbation and outlying hinterland.

Bournemouth Borough Council is the guardian of this stunning asset and works with a range of public, commercial and voluntary partners to manage it.

This strategy will be the essential tool for guiding internal and external investment over the next 5 years, recognising the significance of the seafront as an economic driver for the town. The key challenge will be to sustain the seafront both as a visitor attraction and public amenity, whilst preserving the fragile environmental qualities of the seafront experience.

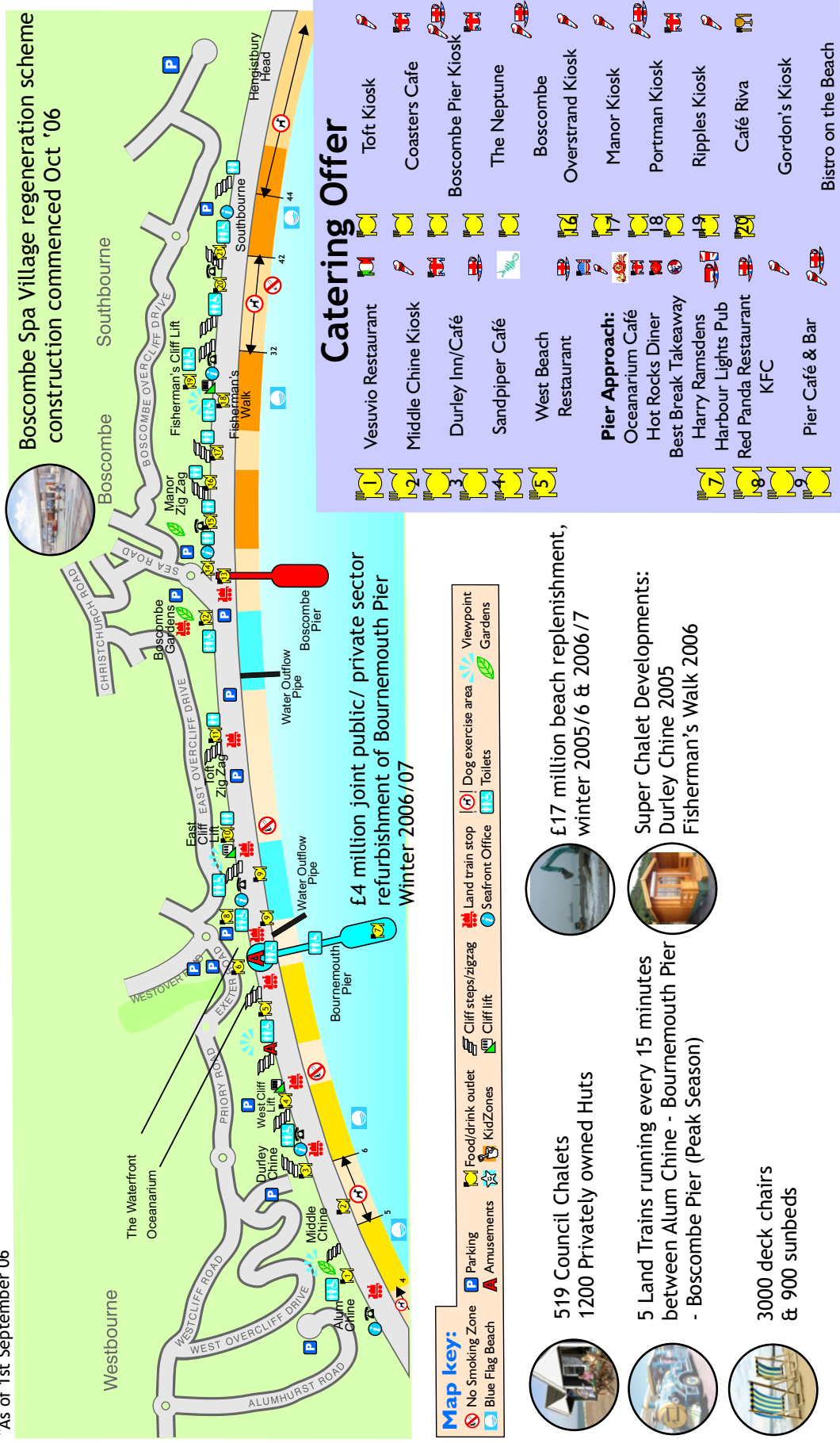
In considering the strategic context for developing and delivering our aspirations and meeting the challenges ahead, we should ask: -

- How can we achieve and maintain an attractive and distinctive environment with the appropriate balance of use in the right locations?
- How can we secure and sustain economic regeneration to create jobs, and wealth for reinvestment, not just for the seafront but also to migrate through all tourism driven industries in the town and conurbation?
- How can we continue to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors through an enhanced seafront experience?
- How will we best deliver services in the most efficient and sustainable way, involving all partners in that process?
- How do we ensure our aspirations and vision are influenced by the many stakeholders in the community, who have an interest in the seafront? This is a key requirement set out in Bournemouth Borough Council's Corporate Priorities and Goals, developed from the town's Community Plan.
- How will we know that we have achieved our vision and delivered the strategy?

2.0 Snapshot of the Seafront in 2006

Estimated 4.2 million visitors to the beach in 2006
 Council revenue up 6%* on previous year despite poor weather in August.

*As of 1st September '06



3.0 Visioning

We have developed a number of statements outlining a vision for the future of the seafront, based on extensive public consultation and visitor research. These statements will inform the rest of the strategy: -

- 3.1 *“Bournemouth Seafront has a national and international reputation centred around a family friendly offer, with high levels of customer satisfaction. We will build on that reputation through continuous engagement and education with our visitors, the local community and partners, to create an inclusive customer experience that is above their expectations and engenders a sense of pride and responsibility”*
- 3.2 *“We will manage the long term sustainability of the environment for future generations, which offers our residents an important public recreational amenity. This will be balanced with the equally important economic significance of the seafront as a mass volume attraction and will be achieved in the most cost efficient and environmentally effective way”*
- 3.3 *“We will develop the seafront around a created theme of “Environmentality”- what we offer, how we do things, how we communicate, how we educate customers will all be influenced by the impact on the natural environment. The seafront will become an environmental showcase for the town, promoting environmental values to our visitors.”*
- 3.4 *“Bournemouth seafront has a diverse range of buildings and a large infrastructure to support the use of 7 miles of beaches set in a very harsh, changing, natural environment. We will ensure sustainable investment through imaginative commercial, and public sector re-investment opportunities. This is not only to maintain an ageing infrastructure, but also to ensure a range of amenities, attractions and services that meet the needs of large number of visitors all year round, and generate sufficient economic regeneration for the benefit of the town and its residents”*
- 3.5 *“Being innovative, imaginative, passionate, enthusiastic; being responsible and taking care - these are the key behaviours we will encourage, in everybody who has a role to play in managing and looking after the seafront. These behaviours are essential to develop effective commercial, voluntary and public sector partnerships, in planning, resourcing and managing all aspects of a truly sustainable and vibrant seafront. The central driver will be around improving quality in everything we do”*



4.0 Rationale for Change - the key drivers and influences

4.1 Climate change

Some degree of climate change is already underway and is accepted by the majority of the international scientific community, although the rate and consequences of this change are still being debated. Change will affect the seafront environment greatly, making for more variable and unpredictable weather; rising sea level and higher tides.

The long term prospect of rising sea levels already determines the Environment Agency's policy of only advising new coastal building developments with a ground floor level of 4.6 metres above the ordinance datum line. Typically, this translates to around 2 metres above the current Bournemouth promenade level.

Beyond the scope of this 5-year strategy, lies the long-term prospect of raising the promenade level along the bay if we wish to retain an amenity beach similar to the one we have now. The recently published Stern Report outlines the economic costs of not tackling climate change immediately and in the future.

Changing weather patterns will also dictate changes in visitor behaviour, with perhaps hotter weather and busier beaches earlier in the season. Our services will have to adapt and react more quickly to meet changing demand. The days of gearing up slowly throughout the year to meet peak demand every August may become a thing of the past.

4.2 Customer Perspective

The constant message coming from consumer research of residents and visitors and local tourism related businesses, is that they place a high value on the seafront as a major amenity and key attraction for the town.

The expectation of the quality of experience is increasing. Customers demand a wider choice of new experiences, as well as the maintenance of high quality basic amenities such as toilets. Visitors have more choice in where they go for their leisure experiences. They are less loyal, and easily persuaded to look for other destinations or to do other activities.

There are growing expectations expressed through the Council's own priorities for greater and more diverse use of the beach as an amenity for all sectors of the community to improve their physical and mental health and well being.

4.3 National Strategies

These seek to establish a co-ordinated framework around a series of agendas, which impact on the management of the seafront. For example, Natural England and DEFRA set various environmental standards for us to meet.

4.4 Regional Tourism Strategies

These aim to ensure the quality of the total destination experience is high. We must manage tourism assets like the seafront in ways that balance economic growth with sensitive and sustainable environmental practices. We must also ensure greater community engagement in that process and thus greater community acceptance of the economic importance of tourism to the destination. We have to also consider the wider economic sustainability and regeneration of the regional tourism industry, ensuring visitors and residents have a wide choice of beach experiences in the region. These priorities are influenced by South West Tourism and the Regional Development Agency (RDA).

4.5 Local Agendas

These focus around policy setting and management across the local conurbation. In many areas, these have an impact on the seafront. For instance, Health Link seeks to promote public amenity use for improving people's health. Local and District Planning Policies influence development on the seafront. Poole and Bournemouth Unitary Authorities are increasingly considering potential economies of scale and consistency in delivering services in the conurbation. Joint working on seafront management may help provide a seamless service to customers.

4.6 Geographical Influences

These necessitate better joint working with Poole Council to deliver consistent approaches to environmental management, beach replenishment, byelaws and water quality for Poole Bay.

4.7 Land Ownership

Much of the seafront, including the beach as far as the median tide line is privately owned with the Council as lessee. The landowners are significant stakeholders, with any new developments requiring their agreement. Similarly, any developments below the median tide line require agreement from the Crown Estate.

4.8 Inter-departmental influences within Bournemouth Borough Council

The quality of co-operation and co-ordination with other business units within the Council is essential for the delivery of services to the seafront. Better levels of consistent support rely upon good working relationships between individuals and systemic relationships through linking with and influencing other business unit strategies and management planning processes. For example, the management of our litter collection services relies on co-operation between two business units of the Council: Leisure Services and Technical Services.

4.9 Resource Pressures

As part of Leisure Services, a discretionary service within the Council, the Seafront has had to contribute disproportionately to requirements for budget savings. This increases the difficulty in maintaining and improving the seafront infrastructure.

The continuing budget pressure requires innovative thinking and planning to -

- Fund and resource programmes for major capital projects with commercial and regional and national public sector organisations,
- Manage and operate the seafront in the most cost efficient way,
- Sensitively exploit commercial opportunities with low cost investment.

5.0 Strategic Aims

This strategy is focused around 3 main aims intrinsically linked to the Strategic Vision -

1. Creating a more environmentally sustainable seafront.
2. Achieving reinvestment, economic regeneration and a sustainable product.
3. Delivering truly memorable customer experiences.

Within each of these aims the fundamental principle in delivery will be forging innovative partnerships to drive up quality across all aspects of the seafront.

A series of policies are proposed for each of the strategic aims. These will be translated into the Service Plans for the appropriate year.

It should be noted that some of the policy proposals stretch across more than one of the strategic aims. We have endeavoured to place these in the most appropriate sections.



5.1 Strategic Aim 1 - Creating a more environmentally sustainable seafront

The major selling point of the seafront is the environmental setting of Poole Bay, and the visual impact of the cliffs and cliff tops, sheltered Chines, sandy beaches and clean seawater.

For the future, 'Environmentality' will be our watchword. Simply put, this word expresses a way of thinking about managing the seafront. Every product, service and amenity we offer, together with the way we and visitors to the seafront behave, should consider the environmental impact. We should ensure that all dimensions of being environmentally friendly and environmentally sustainable are not severely compromised. So how is our environment compromised? And how can it be improved?

Before exploring these points, we will summarise briefly the different aspects of what we might define as the environment and its management.

5.1.1 Physical Natural Environment

The cliffs consist of strata of gravel, sand, clays and sandy clays deposited by rivers and contain diverse fossilised tropical plants and flora. Water percolates freely, running on the clay strata which form lubricated planes. In the past this led to significant land slides. Over the course of the last century extensive works have largely stabilised the cliffs and these have included re-profiling the cliffs, installing drainage and extensive planting to help bind the cliffs together. However, excessive vegetation and trees in some areas are now undermining and weakening the cliffs as well as overwhelming rare native species and wildlife.

The Chines were at one time a watercourse draining the adjacent plateaus. The Bourne stream running through the town centre is the main watercourse, with nine major springs along the seafront.

Since the 1960's cliff and storm water drainage systems have been installed to improve the stability of the cliffs.

The seafront has a double high tide affected by wave deflection from the Isle Wight and Durlston Head. Tidal range is very small and there is west to east littoral drift. Groynes reduce the impact of littoral drift and the beach is artificially recharged, to prevent further coastal erosion and maintain our amenity beaches.

Seawater quality is regularly tested at seven locations by the Environment Agency. Apart from high numbers of bathers the main factors influencing bathing water quality are storm water flowing from the cliffs and the Bourne stream, and Wessex Water's storm drain system serving the town. This can influence the seawater quality, which impacts on the resort's reputation for clean and well-managed beaches.

The climate is typical of coastal oceanic environments. The effects of strong winds, small temperature ranges, relatively low rainfall, protection of strong seas by the Isle of Wight and Durlston Head gives rise to Bournemouth and Poole's micro climate, making the area a popular destination for visitors and offering a range of flora and fauna

associated with more southerly climates, such as can be readily viewed at Alum Chine Tropical Gardens.

There is currently no consensus on climate change predictions for the UK, but it is generally agreed that the weather will become less predictable and more prone to sudden change. This will impact on how we design and maintain our infrastructure and cope with changing demand as customer lifestyles alter. The recently published Stern Report outlines the economic costs for not tackling climate change immediately and in the future. These costs must be fully considered when evaluating the long term cost effectiveness of implementing structural change on the seafront.

There are over 331 species of plants located on the cliff, most of which are of well-established trees and bushes with a mixture of native and imported introductions. There are 41, which are nationally rare.

The cliffs provide an ideal habitat for nationally rare sand and common lizards, smooth snakes, large and rare varieties of butterflies, bees, grass hoppers and other similar invertebrates.

Scrub, coarse grass, ruderal and short grass, dune grasses heath, bracken, tall herbs and bare sandy cliffs all provide important diverse habitats for these rare species and in certain cases help cliff stabilisation.



By contrast, the seabed close to the shoreline contains very little of biological interest. There are few rocks or other natural features for life to cling onto in the face of constant tidal pressure. The Pier structures provide a notable exception as, no doubt, will the artificial surf reef planned for Boscombe.

5.1.2 Physical Natural Environment - Our Way Forward

The proposed policies are as follows:-

ENV1	Cliff Management & Habitats
ENV1.1	Investigate and promote joint management of the cliffs between Bournemouth & Poole Councils, exploring funding streams for further conservation work.
ENV1.2	Initiate surveys and monitoring programmes in respect of plant and animal communities.
ENV1.3	Reverse the current trend of native habitat loss to invasive alien species and to re-establish natural vegetation. This will involve the eradication of hottentot fig and the removal of a significant amount of non-native shrub and tree species.
ENV1.4	Initiate a gorse management programme with an initial reduction in the area of gorse scrub and subsequently a system of rotational coppicing.

- ENV1.5 Investigate the feasibility of goat grazing on the cliff faces as a long-term, sustainable management option.
- ENV1.6 Ensure that important geological features are exposed or can be practically re-exposed if required.
- ENV1.7 Provide interpretation about the ecological and geological importance of the cliffs.
- ENV1.8 Consider the economic / environmental case for retaining or removing beach huts from unstable cliff sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) eg: Toft Zig Zag.
- ENV1.9 Ensure all plans and policies dovetail with the Council's Green Spaces Strategy, Hengistbury Head Management Plan and Coastal Defence Strategy.

ENV2	Bathing Water Quality
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- ENV2.1 Retain and promote Blue Flag Awards for Bournemouth's beaches.
- ENV2.2 Investigate other quality standard awards in conjunction with the Borough of Poole, ENCAMS & UK Beach Managers Forum (UKBMF)
- ENV2.3 Work closely with the Environment Agency, Wessex Water, Bourne Stream Partnership and other agencies to improve bathing water quality in order to meet more stringent EU bathing water directive guidelines. In particular review the options for the Bournemouth & Boscombe surface water drainage outflow pipes.
- ENV2.4 Improve public interpretation and communication of water quality standards, in line with the new EU bathing water directive and lobby central government for a workable solution.
- ENV2.5 Monitor pollution levels from boats mooring at Bournemouth Pier and promote environmental best practice amongst licensed operators.

ENV3	The Beach
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- ENV3.1 Preserve the raised profile and quality of the beach through regular beach renourishment programmes & groyne maintenance and any other methods that may be appropriate, seeking continued funding from DEFRA and the Environment Agency.

ENV4	Climate Change
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- ENV4.1 Work with national and regional agencies to plan for the long-term effects of climate change.

5.1.3 Environmental Factors - Beach Management

All activities whether undertaken by visitors to the seafront, businesses on the seafront and day-to-day undertakings of the Council's Seafront Operations Team have a significant impact on the environment, examples include:

- Air pollution - Co2 omissions from vehicles, motorised boats, air conditioning units.
- Waste - mass volume of litter left by visitors, rubbish generated by seafront businesses and dog fouling.
- Energy inefficiency - energy demands from businesses (air conditioning, heating, lighting, refrigeration, cookers), infrastructure (lighting columns, seafront offices, toilets and cliff lifts)

Energy efficiency and good environmental practice (recycling, use of public transport, less packaging) are now much higher up on the agenda of Local Authorities, regional and national bodies (RDA, SWT, EMCAMS).

With a greater abundance of green accreditation initiatives, there is a clear message that for businesses in particular going green has an economic benefit. This is being thrown into sharp relief by the current rapid rise in energy prices. The seafront offers a prime environment in which to exploit and promote renewable energy technologies such as micro-solar and wind power generation, where appropriate, together with undertaking energy saving measures on our existing infrastructure.

Current environmentally friendly initiatives centre around mechanically harvesting recyclable litter from seafront bins and water flow/ pressure restrictions on all public fresh water showers and taps.

Customer behaviour is very erratic when it comes to litter. Whilst many are responsible and take litter home or use the appropriate bins a significant number leave their waste on the beach and walk away costing the Council £250,000, and rising, per year to collect and dispose. Better education and prosecution initiatives need to be developed to contain this growing problem.

5.1.4 Managing a better Environment - Our Way Forward

Adopting 'Environmentality'

We want to see a golden thread running through all aspects of the managing the seafront, namely "Environmentality"; a greener way of working, thinking and acting to be adopted and promoted by seafront businesses.

This will provide a unique selling point that will differentiate us from most other seafront offers. We want to try and adapt the ethos and values of another major southwest attraction - The Eden Project.

The proposed policies are as follows:-

ENV5	Beach Management
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- ENV5.1 Monitor and collect data on the performance of the artificial surf reef at Boscombe with a view to promoting environmental habitats and coastal defence.
- ENV5.2 Maintain a high level of beach cleanliness through continued litter clearance.
- ENV5.3 Educate the public through a range of initiatives on the profound impact that abandoned litter on the beach has, both economically and environmentally, whilst at the same time developing enforcement.
- ENV5.4 Improve and promote more use of recycling facilities.
- ENV5.5 Work with commercial operators to eliminate glass containers and take on more responsibility for litter produced by patrons to their establishments. Seek ways to facilitate and promote waste food composting.
- ENV5.6 Improve dog bin and cigarette bin provision coupled with tougher enforcement with litter fines.
- ENV5.7 Seek to increase the visibility of beach cleaning operation with more daytime litter pickers.
- ENV5.8 Investigate the case for Leisure Services assuming direct control of beach litter collection to deliver a service more finely attuned to the peaks and flows of visitor demands on the seafront.
- ENV5.9 Establish more seasonal bins on the wider, replenished sections of beach.
- ENV5.10 Investigate options for selling or using seaweed waste for commercial fertilisation.
- ENV5.11 Improve provision and management of disposable BBQ's on the seafront.
- ENV5.12 Build capacity to meet changing peak time use of the beach by visitors and residents as a result of the impact of climate change. Beach Management will need to become flexible, responding to changing demand much more swiftly. A range of temporary infrastructure and transport options are considered in the Accessibility and Infrastructure section of this document.
- ENV5.13 Improve co-operation within and between business units within the Council responsible for aspects of beach management, for example: Seafront Operations, Community Parks & Countryside Team, Parks Operations, Trade & Refuse, Enforcement Team, Car Parks Team.

ENV6	Energy
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- ENV6.1 Trial renewable energy initiatives for small toilet blocks and seafront offices, such as micro wind turbines, solar technology and reduced energy consumption measures.
- ENV6.2 Promote energy conservation and renewable technologies through interpretation displays, events and sponsorship initiatives in partnership with energy companies, other commercial operators and community groups, positioning the seafront as a showcase for 'environmentality'.
- ENV6.3 Investigate external sources of funding for future 'green' initiatives.
- ENV6.4 Audit all seafront buildings for energy usage and publish their energy efficiency rating. Establish an asset management plan to improve building energy efficiency.
- ENV6.5 Offer commercial operators on Bournemouth Seafront incentives to adopt green initiatives to reduce waste, packaging, energy inefficiency and promote ethically and/ or locally sourced products.

5.1.5 Built Environment - Promenade

It is important we ensure that the seafront has a good service infrastructure to meet the primary needs of visitors to the seafront, and offer a safe and enjoyable environment.

The 5 ½ miles of promenade can be best described as the backbone of the seafront. It provides the platform for commercial and amenity buildings, beach huts and chalets, the site of the Pier heads, access for customers, and depots/offices for seafront operational teams and contractors. It is also used as a major recreational amenity in its own right for walking, cycling, running and car parking. Perhaps most importantly it provides a major sea defence and cliff stabilisation structure and a conduit for services such as sewerage.

Because of the harsh seafront environment, the promenade requires considerable maintenance and management to keep it clear from sand, and sea debris on a frequent and daily basis. The promenade will also require major resurfacing over the next few years with subsidence a particular problem in Bournemouth Pier Approach. The promenade also has a number of ancillary services and decaying hard landscaping features that require regular high maintenance: -

- seafront lighting and CCTV, providing a safer and secure environment at night.
- Zig Zag and Chine paths and cliff steps require regular maintenance.
- cliff top, zig zag and promenade fencing and railing that is corroding and rotting.
- showers and water taps - important added value features but can be wasteful, need better drainage, which currently blocks with sand.
- public toilets - recognised as the most important feature by customers visiting the seafront. Maintenance and cleaning is high cost, yet the majority of toilets are only used intensively for less than half the year. Some are very old and do not meet current accessibility legislation. The distribution of toilet blocks along the

seafront as well as the number of cubicles within each block do not necessarily match current and forecasted consumer demand.

The Promenade as a black tarmac feature, and the Pier Approach are arguably, very drab, and aesthetically unpleasing features set in a beautiful natural environment. Whilst it is difficult to establish soft landscaping schemes due to the harsh environment, high maintenance cost, high footfall/wear and tear, imaginative landscaping schemes and public art as well as simple and cost effective initiatives should be developed. Boscombe Pier Approach will be the first location to trial this concept as part of the Boscombe Spa Village Development.

5.1.6 Maintaining the Promenade - Our Way Forward

The proposed policies are as follows:-

ENV7	Promenade
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- ENV7.1 Where practical, use low maintenance materials when replacing old or installing new infrastructure: this includes everything from fences, lighting, benches to beach huts.
- ENV7.2 Promote the establishment of soft landscaping schemes and public works of art to enhance the civic space of the promenade, through the Council's Arts Strategy.
- ENV7.3 Support the implementation of the proposals within the Exeter Road Area Design and Development Strategy, to improve the pedestrian links to Pier Approach from the Winter Gardens and BIC and from Westover Road.
- ENV7.4 When reviewing Supplementary Planning Guidance for Recreation and Amenity Facilities, ensure the inclusion of seafront infrastructure as a recipient of planning gain monies is fully considered.
- ENV7.5 Seek commercial partnerships to develop play facilities and trim trails along the seafront promenade.

5.1.7 Built Environment - Buildings and Structures

Over the past 20 years, many of our commercial buildings have successfully been let where the contractor is responsible for maintenance of the building often with a long lease to ensure they can develop a business that is able to give a return on a large investment.

Even so, the Council retains direct maintenance responsibilities for over 31 publicly accessible buildings and facilities including the structures of 2 piers, plus a further 519 seafront Chalets and a range of stores, depots and offices.

Many of our toilet blocks are located adjacent to, and are used by, customers of commercial outlets on the seafront. We would seek to transfer some level of responsibility and upkeep to those establishments.

Our main Bournemouth Seafront Office and Durley Chine Depot are located in prime commercial spots along the seafront. We would seek to exploit these sites, looking to transfer existing facilities to more appropriate spots. For example, the 'front of house' activities of the Bournemouth Seafront Office could be moved to Pier Approach where it would be more centrally visible and offer customers orientation and information at the key point where they join the beach.

The three Cliff Lifts have high operational and maintenance costs providing a relatively popular amenity during the peak summer period only. We need to consider new funding sources to both replace and run these lifts if they are to be retained in the future. The lifts are currently regulated under the Railways Act, which increases management liability.

Thanks to the commercial strategies of Boscombe Spa Village and Bournemouth Pier, we have secured the retention of both Piers. However, the Council is still responsible for the infrastructure of each pier. Ongoing investment will be required for landing stages and support structures that suffer from very hard and harsh decay by the sea and weather.

5.1.8 Buildings and Structures - Our Way Forward

We will look at innovative ways to future exploit commercial opportunities and better operate high maintenance buildings. The proposed policies are as follows:-

ENV8	Buildings and Structures
ENV8.1	Consider a trial pay on entry system for Bournemouth Pier toilets, in order to finance maintenance and upgrades to all toilet facilities.
ENV8.2	Improve the quality and accessibility of toilet infrastructure by replacing old toilets in quieter sections of the beach with seasonal high quality portable facilities.
ENV8.3	Investigate ways for restaurants and cafes situated adjacent to Council operated toilet blocks to share the running and maintenance of these facilities.
ENV8.4	Seek to upgrade the cliff lift cars.
ENV8.5	Investigate proposals to outsource the running of the cliff lifts to either a commercial operator or community trust.
ENV8.6	Seek to re-locate the front of house activities of the Bournemouth Seafront Information Office into Pier Approach, developing the existing building for commercial use. The new seafront office to be more centrally located in the honey pot area and offering enhanced

information services linking with the Visitor Information Bureau in Westover Road and possibly other commercial partners or the Police.

- ENV8.7 Examine opportunities to develop further super hut developments of chalets offered on 25-year leases such as those already established at Durley Chine - Royal Balcony and Fisherman's Walk - Needles View.
- ENV8.8 Review the current contracts and regulations relating to private hut hire with a view to ensuring all huts are properly and regularly maintained and ownership rights are not transferred without going through the waiting list held by Seafront Operations.
- ENV8.9 Examine the case for reducing the maintenance burden and converting a proportion of council owned and maintained beach chalets into privately let beach hut sites, whilst ensuring we retain the flexibility to accommodate casual hire demand along the seafront.
- ENV8.10 Initiate a trial scheme to provide a limited electrical power supply to a block of beach chalets, using renewable energy technology. If the scheme proves successful, roll the scheme out to other blocks. Future proof the system by installing cabling for data connection at the same time.
- ENV8.11 Investigate demand for the provision of WiFi technology to sections of the seafront and chalets.
- ENV8.12 Develop an Asset Management Plan for all seafront buildings, structures and promenades and determine and agree funding strategies.

5.1.9 Built Environment - Accessibility

It is important that we ensure that the seafront is accessible to potential users and in the interests of sustainability that demand is spread along the beach.

There are several accessibility issues to consider:-

- i) Limited direct access on to the beach because of the Cliffs. This makes it more inconvenient for people during peak times and difficult for people with mobility issues. The limited direct access at the Chines and honey pot sites of Boscombe and Bournemouth and Southbourne result in high concentrations of people with the gaps between the sites relatively empty of people.
- ii) Severe lack of opportunity to extend the capacity at peak times, because of the topographical issues, limitations of car parking on the cliff tops and at honey pot sites.
- iii) Road Access - minor roads serve Beaches to the West of Bournemouth Pier and access from the A338 for day visitors often means weaving through urban and residential roads to get to Boscombe and Southbourne and directional signage could be improved for out of town visitors.
- iv) Exploiting the use of the seafront - the tarmac promenade provides an excellent convenient route to travel from one side of Bournemouth to the other. This is well used by cyclists and walkers. The Land train service, whilst geared up as an attraction provides access from Alum Chine to Boscombe and

has in the past serviced Southbourne. If we increase capacities we need to develop more frequent services along the seafront including routes to the town centres of Bournemouth and Boscombe to relieve pressure on seafront parking.

- v) Inconvenience of public transport - visitors, particularly families, tend to bring a lot of equipment with them to the beach. We need to address convenience issues and pricing structures so as to encourage behavioural change.
- vi) Increasing Accessibility on the beach - the Seafront has responded to the spirit of the Disability Discrimination Act by increasing accessibility to all its facilities. However, we recognise that with sufficient investment, even more can be achieved.
- vii) Maintaining existing public rights of way, encompassing footpaths, Chines, zig zag paths and steps.



5.1.10 Accessibility - Our Way Forward

The proposed policies are as follows:-

ENV9	Accessibility
ENV9.1	Sustain good access to the beach by maintaining Chine and cliff zigzag paths, and cutting back overhanging vegetation where appropriate.
ENV9.2	Promote sustainable transport for visitors to the beach and increase capacity by evaluating a beach park and ride scheme for the peak summer season, working closely with local transport providers and residents.
ENV9.3	Encourage cycling during the permitted times and work with Poole Borough Council to deliver a consistent cycle policy.
ENV9.4	Develop the seafront land train service to link up with Bournemouth & Boscombe town centres and explore connections with Poole's seafront. Look at more flexible pricing to meet demand and consider outsourcing the land train service.
ENV9.5	Work with the transport planners in Bournemouth and Poole to provide linked and affordable services to and from the seafront beaches, particularly the outlying beaches eg:- Southbourne and Alum Chine.
ENV9.6	Consider the development of designated car & bus drop off points at key honey pot sites.
ENV9.7	Work closely with Technical Services Car Parking Section to develop more flexible pricing strategies for car parks close to the seafront, including investigating the concept of car park tariff reductions for environmentally friendly vehicles.

- ENV9.8 Work with bus companies to link in to park and ride schemes and encourage residents to use the bus to travel to the beach.
- ENV9.9 Where practicable, increase accessibility to the beach and its facilities for all disabled visitors and residents and continue to foster feedback on accessibility issues through the Seafront Accessibility Community Forum.
- ENV9.10 Work closely with the joint Bournemouth & Poole Rights of Way Improvement Plan to ensure the future provision of all public rights of way ranging from footpaths, zig zag paths, steps and Chines is maintained. Investigate formalised adoption of all existing rights of way.

5.2 Strategic Aim 2.

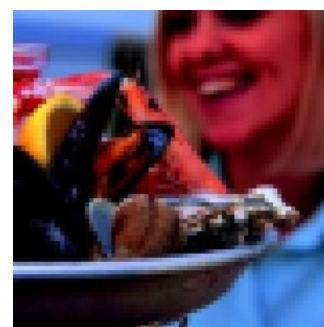
Achieving reinvestment, economic regeneration and a sustainable product.

Strategic Aim 1 sets the foundations that allow for the responsible realisation of commercial opportunities on the seafront. In tourism terms, Bournemouth Seafront is the core attraction without which all other sectors of the industry would either not exist or not exist to the level that is currently offered.

The accommodation sector, entertainment, eating out, attractions and retail sectors have all grown up around this offer. Tourism would not be the size it is without promoting the seafront as a core offer. The business tourism industry would not have thrived without the accommodation stock that grew from leisure tourism developed around the seafront offer.

In tourism terms though, whilst the seafront is the central attraction, its added value offer and services must be of the highest quality and meet the diverse needs of our customers.

More than ever, the commercial activities of the seafront are the lifeblood to re-energising and re-investment in the seafront offer. Commercial rental space contributes toward the cost of maintaining the infrastructure that supports the seafront as a major public amenity for residents and visitors.



With this strategic aim, we are examining the major commercial investment opportunities now and in the future. Strategic Aim 3 - 'Delivering truly memorable customer experiences' will consider commercial services that are ancillary to such investments with the exception of Beach Huts and Bungalows, which have a major impact on the seafront scene and have major investment issues.

As has been stated the context in which commercial activity grows is set by the theme of "Environmentality". It ensures that economic sustainability and growth is sympathetic to the natural landscape.

5.2.1 Investment Opportunities

The majority of commercial investment has and will continue to revolve around the honey pot sites of Bournemouth Pier and Boscombe Pier where visitor footfalls are concentrated.

The Waterfront Complex Building continues to challenge the town, with the owners not being able to secure an anchor leisure offer after the demise of the IMAX cinema. This comes despite the fact that the existing mix of catering and entertainment operators are trading relatively well.

Major new investment at the seafront will need to come from the private sector. The Council needs to fund the infrastructure and landscaping.

The Council's procurement processes continue to be built around ensuring that any investments are market driven and tested, have sound investment and business plans and compliment the portfolio of other commercial services, not only on the seafront but adjacent commercial operators.

Thinking about opportunities and linkages beyond the seafront must not be forgotten. Improved eating out offers, for example at West Beach, Bistro on the Beach & Vesuvio, help to reinforce the contemporary choice of cuisine that Bournemouth is becoming better known for and attracts visitors to the town.

The Boscombe Spa Village Development will bring new day and staying business that will benefit the local Boscombe community through new retail opportunities, wider spread of seasonal use for local serviced accommodation, new eating out outlets, improved residential and holiday accommodation. This creation of businesses will bring new jobs and wealth to the area.

The development of play facilities at Fisherman's Walk with the associated cliff top café offer contributes towards increased footfall in the area, including the beach. Similarly the creation of a themed playground at Alum Chine has helped attract the associated investment in the new Vesuvio restaurant.

Our commercial partners must continually be encouraged to reinvest/ refurbish and where practical, expand and even diversify the offer. We have already seen examples of this with current commercial partners such as the Oceanarium, and Westbeach. It is also important that we bring together our commercial partners to look at collective initiatives in a variety of areas; promotion, resourcing of events and driving up quality.

Whilst there is pressure for more 'wet weather' attractions on the beach, experience and research shows that with the exception of the area immediately adjacent to Bournemouth Pier these are not commercially viable on the seafront. The Seafront is not and will not be the leisure destination of choice in adverse weather.

5.2.2 Investment Opportunities - Our Way Forward

The proposed policies are:-

ECON1	Major Investments
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- ECON1.1 Ensure the redevelopment of Bournemouth Pier is completed.
- ECON1.2 Ensure the delivery of the Boscombe Spa Village Project and maximise its tourism and economic regeneration potential.
- ECON1.3 Bournemouth Pier Approach: Develop plans and seek investment for the refurbishment of pier approach as a fit and proper gateway onto the seafront linking in with the Lower Gardens and Exeter Road Strategy development. To include replacing the current 'market stalls' with a more appropriate offer and to update and change the 'Best Break' catering offer.

- ECON1.4 Re-develop Happylands amusement arcade building to the west of Bournemouth Pier, considering the potential for mixed use which could include residential, catering, retail, conferencing space or leisure amenity and attraction.
- ECON1.5 Continue to press the owners of the Waterfront complex adjacent to Bournemouth Pier Approach to move forward in either re-establishing a new anchor leisure offer or repackaging the existing offer.
- ECON1.6 Address the current poor state of the Westover Rowing club, examining the case for commercial or public amenity development.
- ECON1.7 Examine the opportunities to redevelop the café and takeaway site at Durley Chine.
- ECON1.8 Evaluate the case for development of the café on the cliff top and kiosk on the promenade at Fisherman's Walk.
- ECON1.9 Initiate proposals to re-locate the Durley Depot and develop the site for leisure / commercial use.

5.2.3 Commercial Partnership Working

We want to:-

- Encourage and support reinvestment in premises and the leisure offer.
- Look for opportunities for expansion or where appropriate diversification.
- Develop ideas for new offers and attractions.
- Consider joint funding of events that have a real business return (eg: Summer Fireworks).
- Encourage business activities that are environmentally friendly, and look at ways at driving up quality customer service.
- Develop a joint marketing activity plan -
 - Cross-selling schemes
 - Marketing campaigns - shoulder off peak incentives to residents
 - Market intelligence gathering and sharing
- Establish more involvement in marketing and event and business activities across the towns other business sectors.

5.2.4 Commercial Partnership Working - Our Way Forward

The proposed policy is:-

ECON2	Commercial Partnership Working
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ECON2.1 To develop and review a joint marketing plan for the seafront by establishing a Seafront Commercial Partners Liaison Group.

5.2.5 Water sports

Water sport activities on the seafront are well established and growing in popularity. The establishment of Europe's first artificial surf reef at Boscombe will provide a natural focus and home for activities and spur future growth. It is important that the Council works with water sport groups and lifeguard agencies to ensure safety for all beach users.

5.2.6 Water Sports - Our Way Forward

The proposed policies are:-

ECON3	Water sports
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ECON3.1 Adopt a policy for future surf schools and facilities to enable managed growth around the Boscombe surf reef facility.

ECON3.2 Work with water sport clubs, RNLI and volunteer lifeguards to manage a safe environment for water sport activities.

ECON3.3 Seek external funding and support from Sport England for the establishment of a Water Sports Development Officer for the seafront.

ECON3.4 Establish a programme of water sports events and coaching around the surf reef.

ECON3.5 Investigate proposals to mark out dedicated surfing areas, swimming zones and boating lanes, minimising conflict between water sports users and swimmers.

ECON3.6 Ensure the future of Bournemouth Pier landing stages for continued pleasure boat access. No further vessel slipways along the seafront to be considered.

5.3 Strategic Aim 3

Delivering truly memorable customer experiences

Our Strategic aim of delivering memorable customer experiences revolves around many influencing factors. Most of these factors are generic to all visitors to the seafront - convenient access to the beach, cleanliness, good toilet provision, safe and secure environment, good information and signage. The first three have already been considered previously within the other Strategic Aims.

5.3.1 Product Offer and Geographical Zoning

a) Visitor Segmentation

Other factors revolve around more varying customer needs. To better understand their needs and behaviours we need to categorise both in broad terms eg: residents, overseas and UK tourists, social groups, age groups; and more market segmented terms, primarily differentiated by lifestyle descriptions such as cosmopolitan couples, empty nesters, etc.

Our objective is to ensure the seafront will offer the rich variety of experiences to meet the identified segmented customer needs. For example:-

- Wide choice and style of catering offer (Fine dining to Fish and Chips)
- Passive and active attractions (Oceanarium, and speed boats/kite surfing)
- Family attractions - play facilities, beach games club, and inflatable play equipment.

As a Local Authority, we also have a responsibility to actively promote and encourage healthy lifestyle activities. The Seafront offers great opportunities that can be enhanced with further development.

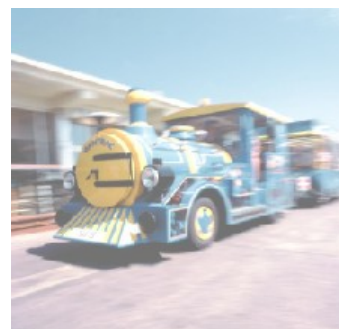
b) Types of Experiences

The seafront offers a variety of commercially driven experiences that have a wider appeal and are commonly seen in a seaside resort:-

- Beach Huts
- Land Trains
- Beach equipment hire (parasols, deckchairs, windbreaks & sunbeds)
- Amusement Arcades

As mature offers, the future appeal and management of these services needs to be considered particularly where maintenance is high and commercial return low or reducing.

We must not forget that as a public amenity the seafront offers a wide range of non-commercial informal recreational experiences that can be enhanced for the benefit of everybody in the community. Some of the most popular activities are in this category and appeal through out the year. These include; sunbathing, swimming, picnics & BBQ's, walking, jogging, power walking, dog walking, cycling, skateboarding,



rollerblading, fitness training, informal sports (volleyball, football), surfing, canoeing, recreational powered watercraft, paragliding, fishing.

With such a wide variety of activities and experiences, there are inevitably going to be conflicts of use. Over many years the Council has tried to regulate and negotiate acceptable codes of behaviour and manage these conflicts, mainly for health, nuisance and hygiene reasons.

Some further developments in visitor management need to be considered. In aspiring to deliver truly memorable experiences we are setting a more altruistic ambition of improving the quality of life of our Community (residents and visitors to our town).

c) Commercial Activities and Offer

The strategy has already highlighted a number of different commercial and non-commercial experiences. Many of the ancillary commercial offers are arguably in a stage of maturity and associated with a more traditional summer seafront experience. These offers still generate reasonably good revenues and help to support the management of the seafront.

The strategy considers proposals, which help to consolidate the offer in the most cost effective way (e.g. Beach Chalets and Beach Huts) and emphasises the need to make sure the offer is better presented and contemporary with today's consumer choice. The increased popularity of hiring of sunbeds instead of deckchairs is another example of our response to changing customer demands and expectations.



The Amusement Arcade, perhaps one the most traditional of seaside offers still trades strongly in the high footfall area of Pier Approach, but is vulnerable to potential development of a large casino in a saturated market. However seaside arcades throughout the UK are on the decline and, for the moment, ours is bucking the national trend. The income generated is a significant contributor to maintaining and managing the seafront amenity.

Land trains as an attraction still prove popular along the busy strip between Alum Chine and Boscombe Pier. The development of the service is based around offering as much a public transport service as an attraction although concerns about financial viability have to be considered.

As previously stated, there has been a real benefit in offering children's play facilities at places like Alum Chine, in increasing footfall and added value experience for young families all year round. We need to find ways to exploit these opportunities further, creating further play facilities along the seafront, some of which could be pay to enter.

The seafront and in particular Pier Approach hosts a wide programme of tourist, community and arts events. Ranging from Friday Night Fireworks to Bournemouth Carnival, Bournemouth Live! Music Festival, Race for Life, Zap Cats, Winter Car Rally, Vintage Car Rally and the focal point for the aerial presentation of the Red Arrows display. The development of major events is considered a vital component in

popularising a tourism destination, but requires significant investment and organisation. A new piazza area in front of the regenerated Bocombe Pier is intended for community and cultural festivals and events.

We must also prepare for the likely increased numbers of visitors as a result of the staging of the 2012 Olympic Games in London, including the sailing events in nearby Weymouth.

d) Geographical Zoning

Geographically speaking, there is some degree of segmentation along the Seafront.

Honey Pot Sites

Bournemouth Pier & Pier Approach forms the main gateway onto the seafront for the majority of visitors. It is closely linked to the town centre through the Lower Gardens and is able to cater for several million visitors a year. The main concentration of accommodation stock, large attractions, town centre parking and places to eat are all within walking distance. For these reasons, the pier and pier approach hosts all the major seafront events.

Boscombe Spa Village development will soon become the second honey pot site. Whilst not the same volumes, the surf reef will help the destination to provide an all year round offer.

Both honeypot sites attract larger volumes of day and staying visitors than residents.

Outlying beaches

Alum Chine and Durley Chine to the West of Bournemouth Pier feature a concentration of facilities over a relatively short distance. This ranges from good quality catering, children's play, beach chalet hire, Blue Flag beaches and tropical gardens. It is a very popular walking route and attracts an equal mix of residents and visitors.

Between Bournemouth & Boscombe Piers. This is a relatively quiet stretch of beach due mainly to the lack of space for facilities and the busy nature of the seafront car park. In the summer it is mainly frequented by tourists, although it is also a popular exercise area for locals.

Fisherman's Walk & Southbourne beaches are spread out over a wider distance and offer a quieter, more relaxed experience. They are mostly used by local residents as well as a smaller proportion of tourists. They offer traditional beach activities.

Quiet Zones (peak time offer)

Future increases in visitor numbers to the seafront will depend on the creation of a year round beach offer as at Boscombe Spa Village. Better transport links and some themed segmentation around water sports, beach sports/health and fitness may help increase visitor numbers in outlying beaches during the peak period.

5.3.2 Product Offer and Geographical Zoning - Our Way forward

The proposed policies are as follows:-

CUS1	Product Offer and Geographical Zoning
CUS1.1	Develop & manage Bournemouth Pier & Pier Approach honey pot site with a range of attractions and amenities that appeal to a wide range of customers.
CUS1.2	Develop Boscombe Spa Village honey pot site into a year round destination attraction, offering alternative and complimentary amenities to Bournemouth.
CUS1.3	Seek an improvement in product and value for money at the budget end of the catering offer on the seafront by working closely with existing and future commercial operators. To seek improvements including the promotion of healthy & sustainable food options (food miles).
CUS1.4	Look to provide a better distribution of catering to the east of Boscombe Pier.
CUS1.5	Consider upgrading and improving existing Children's play provision adjacent to the seafront and explore the funding options.
CUS1.6	Seek to expand and develop existing seafront based events and examine the opportunity to spread major events across Bournemouth & Boscombe.
CUS1.7	Facilitate niche events such as green, healthy lifestyle and community arts and performance.
CUS1.8	Develop a programme of events, engagement and competitions around the surf reef at Boscombe.
CUS1.9	Trial seasonal beach located play park equipment in conjunction with commercial sponsors
CUS1.10	Maintain contact with the Dorset Olympic Group and use the 2012 Olympics to promote sport and active lifestyles on the seafront.
CUS1.11	Actively promote healthy lifestyle activities at the seafront eg: walking and cycling and introduce promenade distance marker posts and trim trails.

The Quality Agenda.

We have already acknowledged that customers levels of expectation are increasing and for the seafront, many of those expectations are being met at the moment. In order to ensure we continue to maintain and enhance our services we need to consider the

concept of “A Total Quality Experience” as expressed in ‘Towards 2015 - Shaping Tomorrows Tourism (South West Tourism).’ Relevant factors identified include:-

1. Quality of the Public Realm (here we can include Natural and Built Environment and Seafront Infrastructure)
2. Quality of Travel (here we talk about accessibility to and along the Seafront)
3. Quality of Service (Customer Service of all partners)
4. Quality of Attractions
5. Quality of Food and Drink
6. Quality of Management and Workforce
7. Quality of Information
8. Quality of Promotion
9. Quality of Accommodation

As a major tourist destination it is important that we achieve the highest standards in all these areas. We have already set out in this strategy policies for Quality of the Public Realm, Quality of Travel, Quality of Attractions, Quality of Food and Drink, and Quality of Promotion.

With Quality of Accommodation we rely on Tourism Services commitment to minimum quality standards accreditation of all accommodation providers.

We will now address the remaining quality factors: Quality of Service, Quality of Management and Workforce and Quality of Information.

5.3.3 The Quality of Service - Our Way Forward

The proposed policies are as follows:-

CUS2	Quality of Service
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- CUS2.1 Work with our commercial partners to review and improve good practices relating around customer service and environmentally friendly practices.
- CUS2.2 Encourage partners to achieve accreditation at national and local level encouraging good practice through partner forums.
- CUS2.3 Work with our partners to develop added value deals through out the year for local residents for such things as eating out, attractions, beach huts, land trains.
- CUS2.4 Foster closer links through outreach work, particularly in schools, to working with partners to promote the responsible use of the seafront around conservation, litter, and safety.
- CUS2.5 Develop where practical “friends of” and beach watch community groups to support and promote responsible use.
- CUS2.6 Develop PR and promotional campaigns in local media, through publications, direct mail and through the Council’s newspaper ‘BH Life’.

5.3.4 The Quality of Management and the Workforce

Central to the Quality of Management and the Workforce is the requirement to provide a safe and secure experience to customers.

There are several aspects and challenges to provide a safe environment for visitors to the seafront and for employees who work for the Council in seafront related services or other organisations. The key is effective partnership working between Seafront Rangers, RNLI, volunteer lifeguards, St John's Ambulance, the Police, Coastguard, seafront contractors, event organisers, and other Council Departments.

It is crucial that visitors are offered the safest and most secure environment that can reasonably be offered and that visitors feel safe and comfortable.

There are several areas in which safety and security is a priority:-

- Recreational use of the water - responsible recreational use by bathers, owners of personal watercraft, surfers and anglers.
- Recreational use of the promenade - responsible use by cyclists, and skateboarders, Dog owners, event organisers, and land trains drivers.
- Recreational use of the cliff top - paragliding.
- Personal Safety - reducing incidence of lost children (KidZone), responsible protection against the sun.
- Reducing Crime - reducing incidences of anti social behaviour, irresponsible use of the beaches at night and personal crime (theft, assault) criminal damage (vandalism).
- Rough Sleeping & Begging - dealing consistently and fairly with rough sleepers.

How do we manage these priorities?

Byelaws - We have a range of Byelaws approved over the last hundred years covering issues ranging from dog fouling, illegal trading, bathing and surfing. Some of these Byelaws are out of date and arguably contradictory. As a result, enforcement by the Police and the Council can be difficult. For example, prosecuting offences under the cycling byelaw require a Police presence and resources to gather watertight witness statements and offenders address details for prosecution.

Risk Assessments of activities - Many of the activities whether organised or informal will have been risk assessed with risk management activities put in place - e.g. RNLI and Water Safety, operation of land trains, and cliff Lifts, management of major and minor events. In light of higher expectations by the public for providing the safest possible environment it will be important to regularly reassess risks involved in these activities.

Statutory Powers - There is considerable legislation covering various activities on the seafront. For example, the Health and Safety at Work Act, Food Hygiene Act, Railways Act.

The Police possess powers to tackle crime, for example Anti Social Behaviour, Vandalism & theft. The introduction of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) and increased patrols on the seafront has been helpful. The public continues to expect an ever more highly visible police presence on the seafront and there is still a requirement for increased Police/ PCSO patrols in the peak summer months.

Council initiated Crime Prevention Measures - this includes the imminent reintroduction of CCTV cameras to key areas of the seafront with a control room based at Police Headquarters that will be a key component in reducing and tracking incidents.

The Seafront has also introduced secure public locker facilities.

Communication - Perhaps an obvious mechanism and is undertaken in a variety of ways:-

- Signage - particularly for byelaws, water and beach safety signage. Signage should be simple, clear, consistent and located at key access points. As new issues emerge alternatives to signage should be carefully considered with additional signage deployed as a last resort.
- One to One - All our partners spend time either warning people about compliance or as the RNLI have done for example, run exhibitions and road shows on the seafront or through out reach work on being safe on the beach.
- Promotion - There is a considerable amount of literature produced by the Seafront Team and RNLI to back up both prevention and compliance with byelaws codes of practice etc. We need to constantly check both how effective it is in reaching the right people and measure the degree of success in changing behaviour.

Conflicts of Use - one of the clear issues that comes from managing the seafront is to try and satisfy everybody's needs and this inevitably leads to some incidences of conflicts of use.

Typical conflicts faced include:-

- Cyclists & pedestrians on the promenade.
- Dog fouling & beach users
- Water sports & swimmers & anglers

We must continue to develop practices, which deter and prevent irresponsible use.

5.3.5 The Quality of Management and Workforce - Our Way Forward

The proposed policies are as follows:-

CUS3	Quality of Management and Workforce
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CUS3.1 Seek to retain accreditation awards for beach management such as Blue Flag and Investors in People.

- CUS3.2 Continue to improve on recruitment and training for seasonal staff.
- CUS3.3 Continue to invest in staff development and training with specific emphasis on improving still further a culture of health and safety. Increasing staff understanding of environmental issues affecting the seafront.
- CUS3.4 Reintroduce CCTV cameras to strategic sites on the seafront and lobby for further expansion of the system in the future.
- CUS3.5 Undertake a Byelaw review with Poole Borough Council to deliver new byelaws that reflect the changing use of the seafront eg: watersports activities and barbeques.
- CUS3.6 Seek greater powers for Seafront Rangers to issue on the spot fines.
- CUS3.7 Seek greater commitment from the Police and Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) to regularly patrol and respond quicker to incidents on the seafront both during the day and night time. Investigate Section 31 dispersal orders where necessary and create closer links with the Night Time Economy Plan
- CUS3.8 Work with the RNLI and volunteer lifeguards to continually improve and maintain the high standard of life-guarding provision on the seafront.
- CUS3.9 Further develop the KidZone child beach safety scheme through securing major sponsorship from an appropriate local commercial organisation.
- CUS3.10 Investigate the potential for establishing out of hours help point systems on the seafront.
- CUS3.11 Maintain and develop clear, easy to read beach safety signage, whilst reducing the proliferation of extraneous signage at the seafront.
- CUS3.12 Seek to integrate communications between RNLI, volunteer lifeguards, Coastguard, Police, Seafront Rangers and Commercial Operators through the use of digital radio technology.
- CUS3.13 Work with Poole Borough Council and other sections within Bournemouth Borough Council such as Dog Wardens, Enforcement Team, Car Park Enforcement Team, Trading Standards Team & Community Parks & Countryside Team to deliver effective enforcement of statutory regulations and byelaws.
- CUS3.14 Work with community beach watch schemes to report improper amenity use more quickly and effectively.
- CUS3.15 Establish better designated safety zones for surfers, swimmers, watercraft and sea anglers.

CUS3.16 Work with Street Services and Housing Sections of the Council to deal consistently and fairly with rough sleepers and begging on the Seafront.

5.3.6 The Quality of Information

The development of the seafront must be based on:-

- The understanding of servicing a broad base of customers, with differing behaviours and needs.
- Engaging with existing customers about their levels of satisfaction and the services being offered.
- Engaging and communicating with potential visitors to discover how they might be encouraged to use the beach.
- Tracking relevant national trends in consumer behaviour, leisure and tourism products and offer, new and emerging communication channels.

As we have stated in our vision statements at the start of this strategy it is not only about customer needs, it's also about ownership and responsible use in a fragile environment. We want to engage residents to support us in taking more pride and ownership of the seafront and in using it more responsibly throughout the year. Engagement is also about community acceptance of the important role the seafront plays in supporting the local economy.

There are currently a range of intelligence gathering activities being undertaken on the Seafront:-

- Bi annual satisfaction surveys
- Tourism market segmentation information
- Resident Customer Focus Groups
- Citizen's Panel Questionnaire
- Considerable informal feedback via Lifeguards, seafront contractors, local Councillors, coastal resident groups, Beach Accessibility Group and beach hut users which is gathered erratically and used anecdotally

5.3.7 The Quality of Information - The Way Forward

The proposed policies are as follows:-

CUS4	The Quality of Information
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Consumer Intelligence

- CUS4.1** Establish more formalised and better resourced information gathering ranging through feedback with stakeholders, community groups, visitor surveys and questionnaires. These will deliver:-
- i. More detailed market composition
 - ii. More emphasis on levels of satisfaction and needs of local residents particularly excluded groups.
 - iii. More regular surveys in line with the Councils Customer First Programme

- CUS4.2 Seek 6 monthly formal feedback from our seafront partners and staff on customer services improvement.
- CUS4.3 Seek feedback from statutory and voluntary groups or organisations representing potentially excluded groups to find ways we can improve their use of the seafront as a recreational amenity.
- CUS4.4 Establish a regular Beach Management Forum for stakeholders and community groups to input into the management and direction of the seafront.
- CUS5.5 Seek to establish a programme of education initiatives through joint working with other agencies eg:- Dorset Wildlife Forum, Bournemouth Education, Bournemouth Arts.

Consumer and Industry Trends

- CUS4.6 Enhance our intelligence gathering, with site visits to up and coming seafront offers (e.g. Watergate Bay), industry seminars, and formal annual industry reviews.
- CUS4.7 Use market profiling of existing customers to scan for changes in their behaviours, needs and expectations.

Joint Research Working

- CUS4.8 Seek market intelligence feed back from Bournemouth Tourism and Bournemouth Tourist Management Board identifying potential opportunities for further attracting stay and day visitors to the town around the seafront offer.
- CUS4.9 Develop joint research programmes with relevant partners (e.g. Bournemouth Tourism, seafront contractors) where practical to avoid duplication.

6.0 Outcomes - What will the seafront be like in 5 years time?

The success of the strategy will only be achieved with all stakeholders and partners contributing to its success.

There should be measurable differences from today and differences must be primarily measured around customer perceptions when they visit the seafront. Linked to that will be measurements that define:-

- How well we have maintained the delicate environment.
- Whether business has grown on the seafront.
- Whether more people are using the seafront for a wide range of benefits.
- Whether we have secured a range of funding streams to reinvest in the infrastructure and buildings.

Below are listed the key strategic outcomes for this Seafront Strategy:-

1. How will people feel?

- Higher levels of customer satisfaction
- Increase in volume of visitors
- Higher use by residents all year round particularly during peak season
- 90% of local community accepting and support tourism and the use of the seafront for day and stay visitors
- Year on year increase in awareness and appreciation by visitors, and residents of cliff and chine conservation work and biological diversity.
- Bournemouth's reputation growing as the environmentally friendly resort in the UK.
- Tourism Business - significant demand by local and national businesses wanting to operate on the seafront leading to reinvestment of existing commercial offer undertaken every 5 years.

2. What will it look like on the ground?

- Buildings - no examples of decaying buildings, a uniform look to seafront lighting, railings fencing.
- Clean and sandy beaches and clear bathing waters.
- Fewer but clearer numbers of signs.
- Year on Year increase in the use of seafront offices as visitor information centres including a seafront information point in the Pier Approach.
- 30% increase in cycling along the promenade, during the permitted period.
- 20% reduction in the amount of rubbish having to be collected and land filled as result of people taking rubbish home and recycling initiatives.
- 20% increase in the amount of domestic and business waste collected and recycled.
- Development of 3-4 Health Initiatives/exercise programmes organised on the seafront.
- Year on year increase in the use of environmentally friendly materials for promotion, buildings, infrastructure, lighting.
- Broader range of different experiences - surfing, water sports, retail, eating offers, running, jogging, keeping fit, adult and child play provision.

- Vibrant Waterfront Complex with repackaged anchor attraction
- 3 major events attracting over 3000 people primarily around Bournemouth and Boscombe Piers funded by a range of commercial and non commercial partners.
- Vibrant and busier Boscombe Spa and Pier with successful leisure and entertainment. Year on year increase in visitors by 5%?
- Reduction in energy use by Seafront Operations and commercial businesses by 10%
- 5 examples of use of renewable energy sources for seafront operations
- 70% of all businesses achieved a local or national environmental management accreditation award
- Increased in the number of customer service related training and accreditation awards.
- Employees and Employers - increase in the number of FTE jobs in the seafront by 20% and increase in the average salary per employee
- Reduction in reported crimes along the seafront by 10%
- Increase in rental income to Council as a result of improved trading by Contractors.
- Year on year reductions of complaints over issues of conflict of use by 10%
- 500 cars a day using Park and Ride locations in both Poole and Bournemouth for peak summer weekend use.
- More land trains carrying 25% more passengers throughout the year.
- Increase in numbers using quieter beach areas.

3. How will we know we are getting there?

- Annual Review of Strategy Plan with Quarterly Report via Council Service plan review process.
- Review and development of Annual Priority Initiatives.
- Bi/Annual Customer Satisfaction and Community Acceptance.
- Environmental Impact Assessments of cliffs beaches and bathing water quality.
- Business Barometer - seafront trading reports, quality accreditation.
- Annual Review of implementing and funding Asset Management Programme.
- Beach Management Users Forum feedback.

7.0 Appendices: How we got here (research)

Appendix 1:

A summary of findings from key pieces of customer survey intelligence

Bournemouth Seafront Visitor Survey 2005 Findings:

Leisure Services commissioned The Market Research Group (Bournemouth University) to survey beach visitors in the summer of 2005. They interviewed 700 people between August & September. The key findings were as follows:

1. The average number of visitors per day to Bournemouth Seafront **at high season during school holidays** was as follows in 2005:
 - o In sunny weather: 65,600
 - o In cloudy weather: 27,300
 - o In showery weather: 20,800
 - o In rainy weather: 8,400
2. The average number of visitors per day to Bournemouth Seafront **at high season during school term time** was as follows in 2005:
 - o In sunny weather: 26,000
 - o In cloudy weather: 11,100
 - o In showery weather: 7,000
 - o In rainy weather: 4,000
3. As satisfaction with the seafront increases, so does the amount of time and money spent by visitors. Visitors who expressed low levels of satisfaction with the seafront spent an average of £3.57 per person on their visit - around 24% less than visitors who were very satisfied.
4. Provision of dog and litter bins were viewed by respondents as the most important aspects of the seafront experience. Safety and security, public toilets, and access for people with disabilities / pushchairs were also important factors. The pier, provision of beach furniture, and the land train were the least important aspects of the seafront.
5. The highest levels of satisfaction were expressed with cleanliness of the beach and seafront area, provision of litter bins, and safety and security. Public toilets were the lowest rated aspect of the seafront.
6. There were four elements of the seafront where average importance exceeded satisfaction by a significant margin. These were:
 - o Access for people with disabilities / pushchairs.
 - o Car parking.
 - o Dog bins.
 - o Public toilets.
7. One-fifth of visitors (20%) were children aged 16 or under. 17% of visitors were young adults between the ages of 17 and 24, and 37% of visitors were adults aged 25 - 54. A further 26% of visitors were older

adults aged 55 years or more. 60% of visitors were female, and were 40% male. The average group of visitors to the seafront consisted of between 2 and 3 people.

8. There was a fairly equal distribution of day visitors (57%) and staying visitors (43%) amongst visitors to the seafront.
9. A combination of the weather (88%) and available free time (72%) prompted the majority of respondents to visit the seafront. Respondents were primarily attracted to the seafront by the sandy beaches. This was followed by the convenience of location and the quality of the blue flag beach.
10. The average visitor spent just over 3 hours at the seafront, and spent £4.49 on goods and services.
11. Bournemouth compared well with other seafronts, with 62% of respondents reporting that it was better in comparison. 27% of respondents felt that Bournemouth was about the same standard as other seafronts, and 11% felt that it was worse.

Seafront Focus Group 2005 Findings:

In September 2005, Leisure Services conducted 4 focus group sessions with local residents who sit on the Citizen's Panel. These groups were separated into Young Males (18 - 25); Young Females (18 - 25); Adults with young families; Citizens aged 65 and over.

The key priorities identified by the groups for maintaining and improving the seafront were:

clean toilets
policing (byelaws & CCTV)
water quality
beach cleanliness
wet weather facilities
cheaper food & drink
cheaper facilities, especially car parking

Appendix 2:

Timetable & methodology for the creation of the Seafront Strategy

- June 2005: Seafront Strategy Scoping Document prepared, approved by Council and offered for public consultation.
- Summer 2005: Audit of seafront assets undertaken. Review of existing strategies and plans.
- August / September 2005: Bournemouth University undertakes independent visitor research surveys on the seafront on the Council's behalf. Surveys of residents undertaken through Citizen's Panel Focus Group sessions.

- September/October 2005: Seafront Stakeholders invited to a series of public sessions to comment on the Seafront Strategy Scoping Document and steer the debate in priority areas for development of the seafront.
- Spring 2006: Identification of deficiencies, determination of services & standards. Evaluation of strategic options.
- Summer 2006: Preparation of draft Seafront Strategy.
- October 2006: Draft Seafront Strategy presented for public consultation.
- November 2006 - January 2007: Council evaluates and adopts Seafront Strategy.
- 2007 - 11: Implementation of Strategy and ongoing review.

Appendix 3: Selected Bibliography

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