

## **SELECTION & CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2014**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT & NATURE CONSERVATION FORUM**

At the inaugural meeting of the Environment & Nature Conservation Forum on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013 a Mission Statement and Terms of Reference were presented for agreement. They were a combination of the two previous Fora (Nature Conservation Forum and Environmental Forum).

During discussion the Open Space and Landscape Officer requested that Point 9 of the Terms of Reference be amended to include open space sites in the Borough, this was agreed by the Forum.

An amended version of the Mission Statement and Terms of Reference has been appended to this report.

#### **Recommended:**

**That the Selection and Constitutional Review Committee agrees the Mission Statement and Terms of Reference, as amended, and that this be added to the Council's Constitution.**

# ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

## ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE CONSERVATION FORUM

### MISSION STATEMENT AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Mission Statement

1. The Environment and Nature Conservation Forum will research, examine, review, collate, report, inform, advise and recommend to the Portfolio Holder & Head of Culture and the Environment, on aspects of the environment relevant to the Borough of Ashford which include, but are not limited to:
  - Nature conservation, ecology and biodiversity
  - Landscape management and design
  - Use, access and connectivity of open space
  - Waste reduction, recycling and renewable energy
2. The Environment and Nature Conservation Forum will provide an opportunity for organisations with an interest in the sustainable development <sup>1</sup> of Ashford to work together to address the protection and improvement of the local environment and to contribute to the resolution of local, national and global problems.
3. The Environment and Nature Conservation Forum will work in partnership to provide a framework to initiate and advance environmental programmes across Ashford. In particular to promote and monitor the sustainability process in the Borough and to stimulate awareness on environmental issues.

#### Terms of Reference:

1. To consider actively and influence policies to safeguard the environment insofar as it may affect the ability of Ashford Borough Council to create and service a high quality growing sustainable community.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (*World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). Our common future. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987*)

2. To report to the Portfolio Holder and the Head of Culture and the Environment, who in turn will exercise their discretion in reporting, informing and recommending to Cabinet.
3. To ensure an integrated and seamless interface with other local, regional and national organisations whose activities involve stewardship of the environment and to be aware of the shared opportunities with neighbouring councils and landowners.
4. To consider what actions can be taken to further improve waste management and increase recycling within the Borough.
5. To promote and influence the further development of safe cycling and walking routes within the Borough and beyond, and the provision of secure cycle storage areas in key locations.
6. To review and/or examine how to support and develop corporate priorities, including town centre improvements.
7. To specifically examine best practice and innovation by others and to review, examine and promote ways in which we can reduce the use of finite resources in favour of sustainable and renewable energy.
8. To work with appropriate agencies, partners and other groups to promote the protection, enjoyment, enhancement and maintenance of our countryside and its biodiversity together with the Borough's heritage and rich historical architecture.
9. To consider matters arising from the management of nature conservation sites and open space sites within the Borough.
10. To work together with organisations such as the Kent Wildlife Trust, Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership, The Conservation Volunteers and other local and community based groups to identify other potential nature conservation sites in the Borough and to support efforts at developing partnerships and projects to enhance nature conservation and biodiversity within the borough.
11. To work in partnership with relevant local and regional organisations and agencies in support of the development of new open space sites.
12. To consider how sustainable drainage and flood defence arrangements can be effectively integrated into the environment.
13. To consider the possible impacts of climate change on the Borough and to contribute towards the development of (i) appropriate *mitigation* policies and actions to address the root causes, and (ii) *adaptation* policies and actions to lower the risks posed by the consequences of climate change.