

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject: Tamar Estuaries Management Plan 2013 – 2018
Committee: Cabinet
Date: 11 December 2012
Cabinet Member: Councillor Vincent
CMT Member: Anthony Payne (Director for Place)
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Ref: KC / TEMP 2013-18
Key Decision: Yes
Part: I

Purpose of the report:

This report proposes the adoption of the Tamar Estuaries Management Plan (TEMP) for 2013-18 of which a full copy can be found at www.plymouth.gov.uk/tecf . The Plan is a non-statutory document which sets out how all the Relevant Authorities, including Plymouth City Council, will manage their activities and work together in order to ensure statutory compliance with respect to the designation of the tidal waters as a European Marine Site under the Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Corporate Plan 2012-15

The TEMP 2013-18 is a cross-cutting strategy document, supporting a number of the Council's Corporate and Strategic objectives and aspirations.

Plymouth City Council's Corporate Plan 2012-15 reinforced the council's commitment to the overarching vision for Plymouth as first set out in "Towards a Sustainable Community Strategy" 2006 as to create "one of the Europe's finest, most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone". A high quality, well managed estuary is critical to achieving this vision. The European environmental designations for the Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuaries must be taken into account as the City grows and the TEMP will help to ensure that sustainable growth supports the effective management and enhancement of the estuary complex.

The TEMP therefore primarily supports the corporate priority of "**Deliver growth**". It sets out the measures that needs be delivered in terms of the Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuaries European Marine Site (EMS) in order that development can continue to take place. This will happen through the provision of policies and proposals which support environmental sustainability, marine employment, development of a public water transportation system, managing flood risk and impacts from climate change and development.

It also supports the delivery of the **Core Strategy** as it provides a framework for managing the waters which has been developed through close cooperation with the four port authorities, the neighbouring four local authorities, the Marine Management Organisation and others.

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:
Including finance, human, IT and land**

The main financial implication for Plymouth City Council is the continuation of the partnership funding for delivery of the TECF service through the Green Infrastructure Team. Budgetary provision is made for the continuing £7,247 contribution per annum for 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16. Plymouth City Council's contribution therefore pulls in £35,074 partnership funding which represents a leverage rate of 1:4.8.

The Tamar Estuaries Management Plan also seeks to guide the actions of the responsible authorities, through for example, the implementation of their spatial planning functions and land management.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion:

The Tamar Estuaries Management Plan includes policies that support the protection of environmental health, recreational safety, flood risk management and managing impacts of climate change.

Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

1. Adopt the Tamar Estuaries Management Plan 2013 – 18.

Reason: To support the sustainable management of the estuary and enable the City Council to fulfil its statutory requirements in relation to management of the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c Regulations 1994) now updated and consolidated into the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:**1. No Management Scheme**

The Defra Review (2012) identified that not having a single management scheme is only a viable option if there are no major issues. However, the Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuaries European Marine Site has many complex issues given that it includes four port authorities, five local authorities, has a city with a strong growth agenda and is also a naval port. This option should therefore be discounted.

2. No Management Scheme but TECF is regarded as the management model.

The Defra Review (2012) identified that such an approach could provide an integrated approach and a forum for dialogue. However for the TECF area it is not a viable option as it does not include an overt recognition of the EMS and provides very limited focus on statutory issues which could impact on the integrity of the site and could therefore leave Plymouth City Council open to failing to meet their statutory requirements.

Background papers:

Tamar Estuaries Management Plan 2013-18. http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/tecf_temp20132018.pdf

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents/made>

A Review of Effectiveness of Management Schemes for European Marine Sites – Final Report”.

Contract Reference MB0113. Produced for DEFRA. 2012 <http://randd.defra.gov.uk/>

The River Basin Management Plan (Environment Agency 2009. "South West River Basin

Management Plan". www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/125027.aspx

Plymouth City Council. 2011. Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report.

www.plymouth.gov.uk/amr.htm

Sign off:

Fin	Place	Leg	JAR/	HR	N/ A	Corp Prop	N/A	IT	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
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Originating SMT Member: Paul Barnard Assistant Director for Planning											
Have you consulted the Cabinet Member(s) named on the report? Yes											

TAMAR ESTUARIES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2013-18

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Since the late 1990s, the organisations who are responsible for collectively managing Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries have worked together to produce a single plan which sets out how the area is to be managed in order that the designated natural environment is maintained whilst still enabling the waters to be used for commercial, leisure, naval and scientific purposes. The Tamar Estuaries Management Plan (TEMP) 2013-2018 is the latest document and provides the latest integrated management framework for the sustainable management of the Tamar Estuaries and the full document is available to download from http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/tecf_temp20132018.pdf
- 1.2. Plymouth Sound & Estuaries are designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the European Union's Habitats and Species Directive 92/43/EEC, and UK the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Sections of the Tamar Estuaries complex are also recognised as a Special Protected Areas under the Wild Birds Directive (1979). The two designated areas are collectively referred to as a European Marine Site.
- 1.3. The TEMP 2013-18 fulfils the statutory duty and responsibility for all Competent and Relevant Authorities to agree and deliver a single scheme of management with respect to the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries European Marine Site (EMS). The TEMP 2013-18 builds on the accomplishments of the TEMP 2006-12. These accomplishments include policy work such as helping shape the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, strategic work such as the adoption of a planning tariff to offset the impacts of increased recreation, the maintenance of the shared geographical information system for the Estuary, the production of information and interpretation such as the water users guide and the website, and ensuring that all new plans and projects are carried out in such a way as to avoid impacts on the EMS.
- 1.4. The TEMP has been developed through the Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF) which is a partnership representing all of the Relevant Authorities who license activities which can impact on the designated site. All Relevant Authorities (as listed in 2.7) are currently being asked to formally adopt the Plan.

2. THE TAMAR ESTUARIES MANAGEMENT PLAN (TEMP) 2013-18

- 2.1. This latest management plan for the Tamar Estuaries is the fourth edition of this important document and builds further on the work which has gone before. The plan seeks to provide the framework for delivering a sustainably managed estuary and coast, ensuring that the resources of the area are there for everyone, both now and in the future.
- 2.2. The document sets an integrated coastal planning vision and framework for the Tamar Estuaries. The management area encompasses the limits of the Dockyard Port of Plymouth Order, and the seaward extent of the Plymouth Sound & Estuaries European Marine Site. This includes Plymouth Sound, the tidal limits of the rivers Tamar, Tavy, Lynher and Plym, and the Wembury coast up to the mouth of the Yealm Estuary.
- 2.3. The Tamar Estuaries Management Plan is a multi-functional document with objectives to:
 - maintain the European Marine Site in favourable conservation status thereby delivering statutory compliance for the European Marine Site;

- to agree, deliver, monitor and review the scheme of management for the additional economic and social benefits through an agreed 'sustainable management agenda' for the Tamar Estuaries and provide a framework for non-statutory partnership action
- 2.4. At the heart of the TEMP is the principle of delivering sustainable management for Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries through partnership action, integrating the different policies and actions that have an effect on the coast, and bringing together stakeholders to inform, support and implement these policies and actions in a coordinated and transparent way.
 - 2.5. The TEMP facilitates a joint approach to the management of the estuary by describing the European designations for the waters, identifying which specific marine species and habitats are affected and the responsibilities and requirements of all the partners. It also describes the specific human activities which must be managed by the relevant authorities in order to secure compliance with European Legislation and sets out the measures that must be taken to protect the site. Finally the Plan provides a thematic plan which sets out the broader partnership actions under 10 themed topics which include coordination, monitoring and information management, landscape and biodiversity conservation, water quality, development and dredging.
 - 2.6. The TEMP has been developed under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Defence's Queens Harbour Master by Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF) which is a partnership which brings together the Relevant Authorities including local authorities, harbour authorities and statutory bodies in order to ensure the sustainable management of Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries. The plan has been devised with additional advice from the Port of Plymouth Marine Liaison Committee (PPMLC) and representatives from other stakeholders and user groups.
 - 2.7. Membership of TECF currently consists of Plymouth City Council, Devon County Council, South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council, Cornwall Council, Ministry of Defence (Queens Harbour Master), Cattewater Harbour Commissioners, Sutton Harbour, Associated British Ports (Millbay), Environment Agency, Natural England, Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Marine Management Organisation, South West Water and English Heritage
 - 2.8. The consultation process has involved press coverage, publication on the city council's website, notification through the consultation portal, stakeholder consultation events and use of electronic media. The consultation process has been in accordance with Plymouth City Council's Statement of Community Involvement and statutory requirements. TECF members have been involved in all stages of the development of the plan.
 - 2.9. The Tamar Estuaries Management Plan and TECF were recently cited as successfully focusing on delivering statutory compliance in a recent study undertaken for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs into the effectiveness of management schemes for European Marine Sites. The same report also identified that TECF is very successful at engaging with wider stakeholders.
 - 2.10. The TEMP 2013-18 is a 57 page document which is presented in four parts:
 - **Part 1: Introduction** to the plan and it's approach;
 - **Part 2: Plymouth Sound & Estuaries European Marine Site** describes the European designations and the specific marine species and habitats that must be protected;

- **Part 3: Managing the Critical Risks** sets out the activities which must be managed by the Relevant Authorities in order to ensure compliance for the management of the Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuaries European Marine Site; how monitoring and reporting will be delivered, how the authorities will work together and how Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF) will bring added value. It is informed by Natural England's Risk Assessment of all human activities. It highlights the relevant authorities responsible for leading on particular actions and details the function that TECF will have.
- **Part 4: Thematic Management Plan** aligns the statutory activities with non-statutory partnership action to form a thematic plan. These themed topics have been developed by stakeholders through the management planning process and are as follows:
 - Coordination
 - Monitoring and information management
 - Landscape and biodiversity conservation
 - Historic environment
 - Water quality
 - Development and coastal change
 - Fisheries
 - Shipping, navigation and safety
 - Public access, recreation and moorings
 - Awareness, understanding and community engagement.

Each of the 10 themes in the full TEMP are laid out in the same way; first of all there is a section on the critical issues relating to that theme. Then there is section stating the objectives for each theme under the title 'what do we want?' and finally there is a table showing the list of actions by which the objectives will be achieved with more detail on priorities for the first few years.

3. PLYMOUTH SOUND & ESTUARIES EUROPEAN MARINE SITE

- 3.1. Plymouth Sound and Estuaries are designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the European Union's Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, as implemented by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Sections of the Tamar Estuaries are also recognised as a Special Protected Area (SPA) under the Birds Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds, as implemented through the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and through The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.
- 3.2. The aim of the Directives is to maintain the diversity of Europe's wildlife through the conservation of important, rare and threatened habitats and species. The two designated areas are collectively referred to as a European Marine Site (EMS).
- 3.3. Designation of the area as an EMS brings with it a legal requirement for the relevant and competent authorities to exercise their functions in such a way as to avoid adversely impacting on the designated habitats or species. Any one of the relevant authorities may establish a management scheme under which their functions are to be exercised but there can only be one management scheme for each European Marine Site.
- 3.4. This document therefore represents the single scheme of management for the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries European Marine Site. It has been written to provide guidance for the work of TECF and its partners, in delivering statutory compliance and best practice in the management of the Tamar Estuaries whilst also delivering broader economic and social benefits. The Habitat Regulations place a general duty on all statutory authorities exercising

legislative powers to perform these in accordance with the Habitats Directive. An EMS management scheme is viewed to be the most cost effective way to achieve this through providing a framework for management and cooperative working with other relevant/competent authorities, especially on large or complex sites.

- 3.5. This plan therefore sets out the statutory requirements for each Relevant Authority in order to ensure compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and highlights where this can be achieved through joint delivery.
- 3.6. Measures are identified which address the issues raised in the risk assessment carried out by Natural England in 2010. This looked at all human activities, their likely risk of causing detrimental impacts on the sites and features of the European Marine Site and the actions required to address them. An adaptive management approach is taken whereby human activity is constantly reviewed and monitored in the light of new knowledge in order to minimise the detrimental impact on species and features that make up the European Marine Site.

4. COORDINATION

- 4.1. The Tamar Estuaries support a large range of commercial, naval and recreational activities. Combining these activities in an area valued for its natural and built heritage will result in conflicting interests. To ensure sustainable management of the estuary as a common resource, there is a need to coordinate these differing interests.
- 4.2. Since the production of the first management plan in 1997, TECF has brought those with an interest in Plymouth Sound and its estuaries into a beneficial partnership.
- 4.3. The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 has introduced further legal duties on new organisations in order to protect the marine environment whilst introducing additional designated marine sites which could overlap with the European Marine Site. This requires even more coordination to ensure the effective management of the Estuary and integration with other initiatives.
- 4.4. TECF is now a mature and effective partnership, providing a unique, responsive vehicle for coordination, planning and management. The partnership has enabled efficient delivery of the relevant authorities' statutory duties, and the pursuit of external resources to allow continued investment in the Estuary. It is therefore well placed to continue delivering considerable social, economic and environmental achievements for which it has a proven track record.
- 4.5. The key objectives for achieving coordinated management of the Tamar Estuaries are:
 - To coordinate those authorities with an interest and responsibility in the Tamar Estuaries through the provision of a forum for communication and debate.
 - To provide a mechanism for ensuring compliance by relevant authorities with their statutory duties of care for the estuary, its wildlife and habitats.
 - To provide and oversee an effective framework for the management of the Tamar Estuaries that resolves issues, delivers added value through partnership and collaboration and integrates with other protective designations.
 - To deliver 'added value' coastal management projects that support the new generation of plans such as green infrastructure and river catchment plans.

5. MONITORING & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- 5.1. High quality research and monitoring continues to be vital to the on-going management of the estuary. There is a constant need to improve our understanding of the ecological dynamics of the Tamar estuaries, and to monitor the progress of specific management decisions. A robust evidence base forms the corner-stone for planning so the relevant data is critical. Data sharing amongst organisations is becoming more common place but common approaches still need to be adopted.
- 5.2. The key objectives for achieving coordinated management of the Tamar Estuaries are:
 - To build on the integrated estuary-wide monitoring and research programme by sharing data and resources.
 - To secure best available data, collected economically, to form the basis of a decision making tool for the management of the estuary.
 - To ensure that management action is informed by good quality current data.

6. LANDSCAPE & BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

- 6.1. The valleys created by the waters of the Tamar, Tavy, Lynher and Plym combine to form one of the most dramatic landscapes of the South West. The rivers are an intrinsic and valuable component of the landscapes of Cornwall and Devon, and a contrasting feature from the plunging and exposed sea cliffs of South Devon and the Rame Peninsula, to the rolling valleys of the upper estuaries and wild Dartmoor. The quality of these landscapes is recognised through their designation as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 6.2. The area is highly designated with Sites of Special Scientific Interest as well as additional marine designations being introduced through the national programme to create a coherent network of Marine Conservation Zones throughout UK waters which will require integration with existing management practices.
- 6.3. Nationally the marine environment has seen a sustained decline in its condition which continues with loss of habitat and functionality as evidenced in the National Ecosystem Assessment 2011 (<http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org>). This has led to an increased understanding of the significance of safeguarding our ecosystems goods and services and the usefulness of an ecosystem based approach for management. Whilst this work has started within the Tamar area there is still much to do to assess the Estuaries as a whole and to put this management tool into practice.
- 6.4. Development pressures continue to affect the landscape and biodiversity and new approaches to biodiversity offsetting will need to be explored. Given that the Tamar has some real opportunities for habitat creation this is an area that will need considerable focus.
- 6.5. Recreational human activities also impact and careful monitoring and appropriate action is needed to reduce the effect on the natural environment.
- 6.6. The pressures for further coastal change brought about by climate change bring added complexity. The understanding of how the management of this coastal change will impact on the European Marine Site is emerging as an important requirement.
- 6.7. The key objectives for improving management of landscape and biodiversity conservation are:
 - To conserve, enhance and restore the distinctive character and beauty of the Tamar Estuaries.

- To achieve 'joined up' management of the neighbouring protected landscapes and marine designations.
- To raise awareness and understanding of the landscape and biodiversity of the Tamar Estuaries.

7. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1. The Tamar Estuaries are nationally recognised as one of the richest maritime archaeological environments in the UK. In common with other estuarine and coastal locations the area has been used in a broad variety of ways. Estuaries can act as barriers, boundaries, places of entry and exit, highways, a means of communication and as a source of raw materials and on-shore and off-shore food resources.
- 7.2. Archaeological sites within such areas are often specialised in nature, relating to these estuarine/coastal specific functions (such sites may include wrecks, fish weirs, boat-building yards, quays, mills and military defences). Some of these sites have statutory protection including many Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and a Protected Wreck in addition to a very large resource of undesignated historic environment assets. The estuaries also have the potential to preserve a long record of post-glacial environmental change within the inter and subtidal sediments. Part of the Tamar is within the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site. However much of the intertidal and sub-tidal heritage is still poorly understood and protected. This is a vulnerable resource subject to many threats and under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, all applications for marine licenses must have regard for the historic environment. The key objectives for improving management of the maritime historic environment are:
- To improve the conservation and management of the maritime historic environment.
 - To promote awareness and understanding of the character and extent of the maritime historic environment.

8. WATER QUALITY

- 8.1. In the Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuaries management area there are
- Six of the South West's 187 bathing waters;
 - One of the South West's 40 water dependent SACs ;
 - One of the South West's 9 water dependent SPAs;
 - Designated shellfish waters.
- 8.2. Water quality is also one of the headline indicators for sustainable development. The need for 'clean' water underpins the estuaries' ecological functions and will determine the quality of many of the commercial and recreational opportunities.
- 8.3. The River Basin Management Plan (Environment Agency 2009. "South West River Basin Management Plan". <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/125027.aspx>) produced by the Environment Agency, sets clear targets for water quality for the waters of Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries as required under the water related European directives including the Water Framework Directive, Bathing Waters Directive and Shellfish Waters Directive. There are challenges meeting the requirements for the six designated bathing beaches at Plymouth Hoe and the shellfish waters on the Lynher and the Tamar, Tavy and South Devon are priority areas for Catchment Sensitive Farming.

- 8.4. Whilst the legislation that drives water quality is different from that controlling the management of the European Marine Site, nevertheless the outcomes are the same as the River Basin Management Plan has identified that water quality is being impacted by agricultural runoff, particularly higher up in the Basin, as well as other pollution discharges into the water.
- 8.5. Marine litter continues to be a problem which has an environmental, economic and social impact and innovative solutions are needed to prevent litter entering the water and to clear it up.
- 8.6. The key objectives for improving water quality are:
 - To achieve a water quality that is compatible with the estuaries' nature conservation interest and commercial and recreational usage as stated in the Water Framework Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
 - To ensure that the estuaries remain, as far as practicable, free from marine litter.
 - To raise awareness and understanding of the water quality issues relevant to the Tamar Estuaries.
 - To assist with the implementation of the Water Framework Directive

9. DEVELOPMENT AND COASTAL CHANGE

- 9.1. The Tamar Estuaries are the focus of significant development pressure and commercial opportunity. Plymouth already has a high urban concentration and the City Council's stated vision is to become one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities. The waterfront is therefore under particular pressure from development. This new development can have both direct and indirect economic, social and environmental impacts on the estuary.
- 9.2. The urban areas of Plymouth have a strong growth agenda which has seen major developments within the city and particularly near the waterfront. During the period 2000 - 2010 the population of Plymouth increased by 7% to 258,700 and between 2006 – 2011 Plymouth has built 4,045 homes many of which are in the waterfront regeneration area (Plymouth City Council. 2011. Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report).
- 9.3. The estuaries already support an active marine sector that is major contributor to the local economy, supporting 12% of all employment in the city and 10% in the wider area. The commercial ports handles over 2 million tonnes each year; the largest quantities of bulk goods in the south west and a major cross channel ferry terminal with regular services to the Continent (DfT 2008) and it is highlighted as having the potential to contribute to the region's sustainable transport through investment in short sea shipping.
- 9.4. The waterfront and estuaries attract a wide range of local and foreign visitors and Plymouth now has a strategy in place to further increase visitor numbers by 800,000 (20%) by 2020 (Plymouth Visitor Plan 2011).
- 9.5. The marine and renewables sector is one of six identified as economic priority sectors for the City. Based around Plymouth's internationally respected academic institutions and naval related businesses, it has the potential to bring substantial economic benefits to the sub region.
- 9.6. Below high water, the Marine Management Organisation is tasked with developing plans for marine areas which will include the estuaries.
- 9.7. Climate change, including increased storminess and sea-level rises will impact on erosion, flooding and potentially alter the tidal flow regime in the estuary. Coastal protection works

will need to have regard for the natural environment opportunities provided by funds such as the Flood Defence grant in aid scheme.

- 9.8. These trends and activities continue to bring increased development pressure within the area's coastal zone. Business must be allowed to flourish, but in a manner that respects the sensitivities of the surrounding environment. However, due to the complexities of both the regulatory framework and the estuarine environment, decision-making in this area is frequently challenging. TECF, PPMLC and WAG are well placed to provide a readily accessible pool of local knowledge, expertise and guidance to inform development and commercial decision making.
- 9.9. The key objectives for addressing development and coastal change opportunities are:
- To ensure that the interests and integrity of the Tamar Estuaries are not compromised by inappropriate development and that net biodiversity gain is achieved wherever possible.
 - To ensure that development occurs in a sustainable manner, in accordance with the overall needs of the local community and with full regard for conservation interests of the estuary as a whole.
 - To support sustainable marine transport, commerce and tourism initiatives.
 - To integrate the coastal erosion and flood risk management schemes into the wider estuarine management.

10. FISHERIES

- 10.1. The fisheries of the Tamar Estuary are characterised by a mixture of commercial, recreational, and environmental concerns and interests. In 2009 over 10,000 tonnes were landed at Plymouth Fish Market worth nearly £9million (MCA figures from the Port of Plymouth Evidence Base) although little is caught within the European Marine Site itself.
- 10.2. There has been much change in the regulation of fisheries and it is now an area of shared responsibility between the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Queens Harbour Master, Environment Agency, the Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) and the Devon and Severn IFCA. As fisheries are an activity with the potential to impact on the European Marine Site, there is also a need for liaison with Natural England. Much work is needed to increase awareness of the regulations that govern fishing in the Estuary.
- 10.3. Under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, parts of the Tamar Estuaries have been proposed as a Marine Conservation Zone in order to protect the South West's only known spawning ground for Smelt, a fish of which very little is known. This is in addition to the Upper Tamar Estuary also being the only known spawning site for Allis Shad in the UK
- 10.4. Concerns have been raised about the ecological impacts associated with intertidal bait digging and the shore crab fishery (crab tiling). Also recreational angling has grown significantly in popularity delivering social and economic benefits, but the possible impacts on estuaries are currently poorly understood and unquantified.
- 10.5. Finally climate change will result in changes to our fish species. More work is required to understand the impact this will have on our fishing industry.
- 10.6. The key objective for fisheries management is:
- To achieve the sustainable management of the Tamar Estuaries fishing resource

11. SHIPPING, NAVIGATION AND SAFETY

- 11.1. The Port of Plymouth is the largest naval base in Western Europe and sees 60,000 vessel movements every year. The commercial ports of Cattedwater, Sutton Harbour and Millbay handle over 2 million tonnes per year, the largest quantities of bulk goods in the South West (DfT,2008) and it is has the potential to appreciably contribute to the regions sustainable transport through investment in short sea shipping.
- 11.2. The statutory duty to protect the port and maintain safe navigation rests with the Queen's Harbour Master and civilian port authorities. In carrying out these duties there is need to ensure that any damaging impacts on environmental assets are minimised and conflicts with other users avoided.
- 11.3. The legislation controlling dredging activity has recently been tightened with additional controls being brought in for water injection dredging as well as maintenance dredging. The Dredging Protocol Baseline Document, as produced in 2011, provides the evidence base to inform the consenting process.
- 11.4. The key objectives for shipping, navigation and safety management are:
 - To provide for the continuing safe use of the estuaries by all types of vessel.
 - To protect the public right of free navigation within the constraints of the relevant legislation.

12. PUBLIC ACCESS, RECREATION AND MOORINGS

- 12.1. The waters of Plymouth Sound and the estuaries provide a highly valuable resource for public enjoyment, be it for watersports, angling, wildfowling, walking next to it or simply enjoying the view from the land. However these access opportunities to the water can be threatened by development and poor management. Slipways, wharves, piers, jetties, footpaths, roads and car parks form the critical infrastructure which enables this access.
- 12.2. The waterways of the Tamar are crucial to the public enjoyment of the recreational resource found within the estuaries. Promoting sustainable access to the estuaries must also be a primary approach to delivering wider understanding and awareness of the estuaries' value. There is a need to encourage access for both shore based and water based recreation.
- 12.3. The Tamar Estuaries and adjoining land accommodate a wide range of recreational activities such as walking and cycling, wildlife watching, sailing, angling, wildfowling, canoeing, jet skiing, water skiing, windsurfing, standup paddle boarding, sub aqua diving and swimming. Access and recreation also underpin significant and increasing economic activity for marine commerce and tourism.
- 12.4. The provision of moorings allows access to the water for boat users. Licenses to lay all private and public moorings in the Dockyard Port of Plymouth are issued by the Queen's Harbour Master. Mooring allocations are currently dispersed between a range of local authorities, moorings associations and sailing clubs.
- 12.5. The local population is set to rise with an estimated 20% increase in the number of Plymouth households during the period 2011-2031 (Plymouth City Council 2011. Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report) As the local population increases, so to does the demand for water based recreation. Since we know that water based recreation has the potential to impact on the sites and features of the European Marine Site it is critical that recreation is managed in order to avoid any negative impacts.
- 12.6. Key management objectives are:

- To ensure that existing public access to the estuaries and coast is maintained and publicised.
- To seek opportunities for improving the quality of public access.
- To avoid any disturbance arising from increased recreational activities due to population growth.
- To ensure an estuary-wide approach to the management of moorings.
- To improve information management about mooring facilities in the Tamar Estuaries.

13. AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 13.1. The sustainable management of the estuaries' assets will only be achieved through a wider understanding of the area's marine estuarine, biodiversity and cultural values. It is not sufficient for the scientists, experts, managers and regulators to understand that our estuary is unique. This message must also be communicated to our political audiences, to the estuary users and visitors and to the schools and young people of the area.
- 13.2. There is already considerable expertise and effort directed at providing high quality educational information about the specific sections of estuary and surrounding coast. However provision is currently uncoordinated and fragmented due to the wide range of voluntary, public and private sector organisations involved in delivery.
- 13.3. Key management objectives for improving awareness, understanding and community engagement are:
- To increase awareness & understanding about the natural & historic heritage of the Tamar Estuaries.
 - To achieve high awareness of TECF's role in delivering sustainable management of the Tamar Estuaries.

14. DELIVERY OF THE PLAN

- 14.1. The Plan will be delivered collectively by all the members of the Forum with key actions delivered by staff of Plymouth City Council through a contractual arrangement with the key Relevant Authorities who will make up the membership of the TECF Core Group. Other partners will be included through arrangement. In addition the Plan will be delivered:
- By pooling financial and intellectual resources thereby providing the most cost effective delivery mechanism;
 - By ensuring that the relevant authorities are aware of their statutory duties and obligations towards the estuaries' natural assets, and that they are supported in undertaking these duties in a manner that achieves favourable status for the European Marine Site;
 - By ensuring that mechanisms exist for open and transparent communication in a working environment characterised by shared and overlapping interests and responsibilities;
 - By providing an open and accessible pool of relevant expertise in the form of TECF and its working groups.
 - Through the guidance of a Core Group of the TECF funding partners who will guide the production of the delivery plan including the detail on individual project targets, milestones, timetables, performance indicators and project funding.

- By providing a vehicle to ‘check and balance’ the respective responsibilities and deliverables of the TEMP.
- 14.2. Actions in the TEMP are by necessity high-level and strategic. The detailed delivery will be through a prioritised 3-yearly plan which is developed through the TECF Core Group. For example it is known that there is an issue with poor water quality arising from storm overflows from sewage treatment works and that this in turn has an impact on the quality of the bathing beaches in Plymouth which could impact on the ability of Plymouth to achieve its vision of becoming one of Europe’s finest most vibrant waterfront cities. This is addressed in the Plan with specific actions identified for Environment Agency to improve water quality in Part 3 Managing the Critical Risks of the Plan. Further actions are then identified in the Water Quality section of Part 4 where there is an action to ‘Deliver bathing waters action plan’ with the Environment Agency, South West Water, Plymouth City Council and South Hams District Council as being the key authorities involved. Further detail is provided again in the TECF Service Plan to deliver one project which tackles this issue over the next 3 years.
- 14.3. In this way, the TEMP 2013-18 provides the framework to hold stakeholders to account for delivering what they have agreed to as well as ensuring that Plymouth City Council plays its part through the management framework, delivery plan and monitoring activity.

15. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CITY COUNCIL

- 15.1. Plymouth City Council is one of 15 Relevant Authorities responsible for the management of the European Marine Site. The Tamar Estuaries Management Plan 2013-18 and continued participation in Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum fulfils the requirements of all Relevant Authorities in the management of the EMS.
- 15.2. The main financial implication for Plymouth City Council is the continuation of the partnership funding for delivery of the TECF service through the Green Infrastructure Team. Budgetary provision is made for the continuing £7,247 contribution per annum for 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- 15.3. The Tamar Estuaries Management Plan also seeks to guide the actions of the responsible authorities, through for example, the implementation of their land use planning functions and land management. It will be a matter for service providers to consider the detailed options for how they meet the objectives of the Plan, but no significant additional cost implications are anticipated.

16. NEXT STEPS

- 16.1. That Cabinet adopt the Tamar Estuaries Management Plan 2013-18.
- 16.2. The delivery of key milestones for the plan will then form part of the Planning Department Business Plan 2013-15 and will be delivered through the Green Infrastructure Team.