

Cheltenham Borough Council
Cabinet– 5th March 2019
Urban Gulls Strategy

Accountable member : Andrew McKinlay, Cabinet Member Development and Safety

Accountable officer: Mark Nelson, Enforcement Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Key/Significant Decision Yes

Executive summary

A review of Urban Gulls was initiated by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2018, following dissatisfaction with the Council's response to controlling the urban gull population in residential areas.

The subsequent O&S working group considered the key problems caused by urban gulls, including noise nuisance, potential health risk and damage to buildings from gull droppings, as well as the challenges to finding and treating their nests.

The group concluded that key to addressing the issues was denying habitat, making successful nesting in Cheltenham less easy through treating more gulls eggs each year and encouraging businesses and residents to gull-proof their own properties. In addition, reducing access to food sources, including food waste and litter, with the need for Cheltenham Borough Council to take a strategic lead, working alongside partners, residents and businesses to tackle the problem.

The Urban Gulls Scrutiny Task Group report, attached as appendix 2, was taken to Cabinet on 4th December 2018 with a recommendation that Cabinet endorse the task group recommendations, as set out in the task group report, including an increase of £10k in the available budget for this area.

Cabinet welcomed the report and requested officers to look at the details and come back to Cabinet with an officer view of the proposals.

The importance of a costed action plan, to ensure that the extra funding is spent in the most effective and timely way, was recognised. This costing exercise is currently in the process of being completed by officers, but the wide and cross cutting nature of the scrutiny report proposals has meant that this has taken longer than was originally envisaged. While the recommended way forward acknowledges that, it allows any urgent issues to be tackled where appropriate.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Agree a £10k additional budget allocation for 2019-20, funded from additional income generated in 2018-19; and**

2) Instruct the Enforcement Manager to develop and implement a costed action plan, within identified resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Member.

Financial implications	<p>If the £10k additional budget allocation is approved for 2019/20 the Enforcement Manager, being responsible for budget spend in this area, will consult with the Cabinet Member to agree a costed action plan and prioritise actions within the available resource.</p> <p>Contact officer: Sarah.Didcote@publicagroup.uk, 01242 264125</p>
Legal implications	<p>All species of gull are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This means it is illegal to intentionally injure or kill any gull or damage or destroy an active nest or its contents. It is recognised in law, however, that there will be circumstances where control measures are necessary, but these must be proportionate.</p> <p>Contact officer: donna.marks@tewkesbury.gov.uk, 01684272068</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	None
Key risks	See appendix 1
Corporate and community plan Implications	The report recommendations contribute positively towards the vision that Cheltenham is a place where all our people and the communities they live in thrive.
Environmental and climate change implications	Any actions to reduce the gull population will contribute positively to improving Cheltenham's environment.
Property/Asset Implications	<p>Where legal and practicable the Council will carry out necessary works on their own buildings to help control the gull population.</p> <p>Contact Officer: gary.angrove@cheltenham.gov.uk</p>

1. Background

1.1 See appendix 2

2. Reasons for recommendations

2.1 The recommendations follow the work of the Urban Gulls Scrutiny Work Group, as contained in appendix 2.

3. Alternative options considered

3.1 Options were considered as part of the work of the scrutiny group. See appendix 2

4. Consultation and feedback

4.1 The group organised a drop-in session which took place at the Municipal Offices. The drop-in session was attended by local residents, members of the Urban Gulls Forum and businesses who shared their experiences of how they are affected by nesting gulls and what they think the council should do to better control the urban gull population in Cheltenham.

5. Performance management –monitoring and review

5.1 The success of proposed elements of a costed action plan will be monitored to ensure best use of available resources.

Report author	Contact officer: Mark Nelson; mark.nelson@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242264165
Appendices	1. Risk Assessment 2. The Urban Gulls Scrutiny Task Group report
Background information	1. The Urban Gulls Scrutiny Task Group report 2. Scrutiny Task Group Review – Urban Gulls. Cabinet Report 4 th December 2018

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	Any risks associated with equality impact										
	Any environmental risks										
	If an effective strategy / action plan to control the urban gull population in Cheltenham is not adopted and appropriately funded, then the impacts and issues associated with gulls, as highlighted in the O&S working group report, may progressively get worse if the gull population increases.	Enforcement Manager – Mark Nelson		2	4	8		Develop and agree an action plan with the aim of controlling the size of Cheltenham's gull population.			
Explanatory notes Impact – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-5 (1 being least impact and 5 being major or critical) Likelihood – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6 (1 being almost impossible, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 significant, 5 high and 6 a very high probability) Control - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close											