



SOUTHWOLD HARBOUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 18 January 2024

Subject	Southwold Harbour Vision
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Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	Southwold

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

This report provides the Committee with an overview of the potential vision for Southwold Harbour over a 10-year period and beyond.

Recommendation:

That having reviewed the report and background document at Appendix A consideration is given to supporting the concept of the Harbour 2035 vision and developing a broad stakeholder consultation.

Impact Assessment

Governance:

None directly arising from this report.

Environmental:

None directly arising from this report.

Equalities and Diversity:

None directly arising from this report.

Financial:

Non directly arising from this report

Legal:

None directly arising from this report.

Risk:

None directly arising from this report.

Harbour Business Plan Priorities

To be added when the plan is in place.

East Suffolk Council Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the themes of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal:		
T01	Growing our Economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	<p>The Southwold Harbour Vision 2035 represents a comprehensive and forward-thinking framework designed to steer the development and enhancement of the Southwold Harbour area over the next decade and beyond. Rooted in a rich maritime heritage and a longstanding reputation as a vibrant fishing and recreational hub, this vision seeks to balance sustainable growth with environmental stewardship and community interests.</p> <p>The core objective is to transform the harbour into a modern, multi-functional destination while preserving its unique character and ecological significance. Central to this vision are the principles of economic vitality, social inclusivity, and ecological responsibility. These principles aim to foster a thriving economy, enhance the well-being of the local community, and protect the natural beauty and biodiversity of the harbour environment.</p> <p>Key components of the vision include infrastructure modernisation, tourism development, maritime industry support, and habitat conservation. The plan also addresses the challenges posed by climate change, aiming for resilience and adaptability in harbour management and development.</p> <p>This vision encapsulates a collective ambition to create a sustainable and prosperous future for Southwold Harbour, ensuring its legacy as a cherished landmark for generations to come.</p>
2 Current position	
2.1	<p>Southwold Harbour is at a pivotal point where its current state and future prospects are being re-evaluated. The harbour, while retaining its charm and serving as a vital local economic contributor, faces challenges in infrastructure, environmental sustainability and evolving community needs. Currently, the infrastructure, though functional, requires significant modernisation to meet contemporary standards and future demands. Environmental considerations, especially in the face of climate change, are increasingly pressing, necessitating proactive measures to protect and enhance the harbour's natural ecosystem. The community's evolving expectations around accessibility, amenities, and economic opportunities also call for a strategic redevelopment approach. Additionally, the balance between supporting the traditional maritime industry and promoting tourism presents a complex dynamic that needs careful management. The harbour's potential as a premier coastal destination is yet to be fully realised, indicating substantial room for growth and improvement. Recognising these factors, the Southwold Harbour Vision 2035 aims to address these challenges head-on, paving the way for a revitalised harbour that is economically robust, environmentally sound, and socially vibrant. This vision is set against the backdrop of an ever-changing landscape, where adaptability and long-term planning are crucial for achieving a sustainable and prosperous future for the harbour and its community.</p>

3 How to address current situation

- 3.1 Addressing the current challenges at Southwold Harbour requires a strategic and multi-dimensional approach, aligned with the goals of the Harbour Vision 2035. Firstly, infrastructure modernisation is paramount. This involves upgrading the harbour facilities to enhance efficiency, safety, and user experience, catering to both the maritime industry and recreational users. Environmental sustainability should be a cornerstone of all development projects, incorporating measures like habitat restoration, pollution control, and climate resilience planning.
- Promoting a balance between the maritime industry and tourism development is essential. This can be achieved by supporting traditional fishing activities while simultaneously creating attractive, eco-friendly tourist attractions that respect and highlight the harbour's natural and cultural heritage.
- Engaging the local community is vital; their input and participation in planning and development processes ensure that the harbour's evolution reflects their needs and aspirations.
- A clear, adaptable governance structure is needed to oversee these initiatives, ensuring that they are implemented efficiently, transparently, and in a manner that is accountable to all stakeholders.
- By embracing these approaches, Southwold Harbour can transition from its current position to a future that is vibrant, sustainable, and in harmony with its historical and environmental context.
- The Harbour Vision 2035 is not just a plan for redevelopment, but a commitment to the holistic and sustainable growth of the harbour and its community.

4 Reason/s for recommendation

- 4.1 The concept of the Harbour Vision 2035 is not only ambitious but also critically necessary for the future prosperity and sustainability of the harbour. The vision offers a blueprint for a harmonious blend of economic, environmental, and social advancements that align with the long-term goals of the community and stakeholders.
- It is, therefore, recommended that serious consideration be given to endorsing the Harbour Vision 2035 as a guiding principle for the harbour's development. Furthermore, to ensure the vision's success and its acceptance by all involved parties, it is crucial to embark on a broad stakeholder consultation process. This process will provide a platform for inclusive dialogue, enabling the incorporation of diverse perspectives and expertise into the planning and implementation phases.

Through active engagement, we can foster a collective sense of ownership and commitment to the vision, thereby enhancing the likelihood of its successful realisation.

Supporting the Harbour Vision 2035 and initiating comprehensive stakeholder consultations will not only demonstrate a forward-thinking leadership approach but also secure a resilient and thriving future for Southwold Harbour that is reflective of the community's shared aspirations.

Appendices

Appendices:

Appendix A | Southwold Harbour Vision 2035

Background reference papers:

None