

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Borough Wide Heritage Strategy and Action Plan</b>
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	NO - Part I
Member reporting:	Councillor Coppinger
Meeting and Date:	Planning and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2019
Responsible Officer(s):	Russell O'Keefe, Executive Director Place and Jenifer Jackson, Head of Planning
Wards affected:	All

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## REPORT SUMMARY

1. This report seeks agreement of a brief for the development of a Borough wide Heritage Strategy and Action Plan Supplementary Planning Document as part of the Local Plan and emerging Borough Local Plan. These documents will identify and celebrate the importance of the Borough's heritage, provide strategies for its protection and enhancement, and consider how best to interpret and harness this special resource for the benefit of the community, visitors and the local economy.
2. This report recommends that the Cabinet approves the brief and confirms agreement to commence the Council's procurement process to engage suitable consultant to undertake the work.

## 1 DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

**RECOMMENDATION: That Planning and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel notes the report and:**

- i) **Agrees the brief for a Borough Wide Heritage Strategy and Action Plan; and**
- ii) **Authorises the Head of Planning to undertake the requisite procurement procedure to engage a consultant to undertake the project in accordance with the agreed brief.**

## 2 REASON(S)

- 2.1 A key element of the Council's future approach to the Borough's Historic Environment is contained within para 11.2.1 of the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (BLPSV). This advises that a Heritage Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be produced and adopted to guide the implementation of the Council's Historic Environment Policies.

### Background

- 2.2 The purpose of the Heritage Strategy SPD is to set out a clear strategy for the borough to guide conservation and heritage activities. The borough has a unique and distinctive heritage which should be preserved and enhanced for present and future generations. The historic environment is a valuable asset which contributes to broader strategic objectives including economic development, urban and rural regeneration, tourism, leisure and recreation, community development, good urban design and won planning, provision of informal and formal education, development of skills, and achieving sustainable development. Whilst this Strategy will flow from the development plan it will not be a planning policy document *per se*. The Heritage Strategy should provide a vision and key aims and objectives for the borough's heritage; it should be supported by a detailed Background and Action Plan document.
- 2.3 Many local authorities already have Heritage Strategies, these tend to be varied in their approach and content, and most include lists of formally designated assets – listed building, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments - and are rather academic in tone. However, the Council is keen to provide a document that is driven by the local community and harnesses their views and experience of local heritage. It will aim to bring interested parties, local people, groups and other stakeholders together to generate a shared vision for the future of the borough's heritage and to provide priorities and proposals for how these will be implemented. Key aims of the Heritage Strategy will be to promote partnership and collaborative working between the councils, its partners and key stakeholders and to generate educational, cultural and economic benefits for the Borough as a whole. Initial discussions have been held with Historic England, who appears to support the approach in principle.
- 2.4 The appointed consultant will be required to provide a community led Strategy document, this is to be written in a manner that will be easily accessible to all. It is anticipated that it will cover a 15 year period, although it will be designed so that it can be reviewed by the council as part of a rolling programme. The issues and priorities identified will then be addressed through a number of agreed actions, such as projects, improvement schemes, guidance and events that will form part of the Action Plan. This will be designed to be reviewed and updated annually, and progress will be monitored by a steering group, made up of stakeholders. It is likely that, in the long term, the project will require a project officer and Historic England has indicated that it may be willing to assist with the cost of such a post.
- 2.5 It is important that the appointed consultant has a proven track record of undertaking this type of work, and in particular working with community and interest groups. The brief is very clear with regards to the nature and scope of the project and the required outcomes. Funding from the Government through the Planning Delivery Fund round in 2018/19 has already been secured for the production of the strategy.

### **Programme**

- 2.6 It is anticipated that, if agreed, the project will be out to tender in May 2019. Following this, the initial tender bids/responses will be assessed by officers, and selected prospective consultants will then be interviewed. The section criteria to be used for the assessment are contained within the attached brief. A Council contract will then be awarded to the winning consultant. Once appointed the consultant will

be required to provide an inception report, this will outline their overall approach to the project, it will identify key stakeholders and agree how they, and the wider community, will be engaged by the project. Workshops/meetings will be held and a steering group consisting of local stakeholders will be appointed to oversee the project. Draft final reports will be produced, which will be subject to public consultation over a six to eight week period in line with the legislation and the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. All consultation responses will be considered and the reports adjusted accordingly. The final documents will be reported back to Cabinet in summer 2020 for final approval and adoption as SPD.

**Table 1: Options**

Option	Comments
<p>Do nothing, do not provide a Strategy or Action Plan</p> <p><b>This is not recommended.</b></p>	<p>This would mean that a key element proposed as part of the Borough Local Plan approach to the Historic Environment would not be provided. Opportunities to improve the Borough's historic environment would be missed as would opportunities to engage with local communities, providing cultural, educational and economic benefits across the borough.</p>
<p>To agree the brief and commence the procurement process</p> <p><b>This is the recommended option.</b></p>	<p>This approach would respond to emerging Council policies, current legislation and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework in terms of preserving and enhancing the significance of the historic assets of the borough. It would engage with stakeholders and ensure that the historic environment of the borough is properly understood and that action is taken to address identified issues. The action taken would also seek to maximise benefits to the community and support the borough's economy.</p>

### 3 KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The aim of the first three years of the project would be to establish the Strategy and commence the first two years of the Action Plan with provision for the review and updating of the latter.

**Table 2: Key implications**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Unmet</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Exceeded</b>	<b>Significantly Exceeded</b>	<b>Date of delivery</b>
Yr 1 Project out to tender, consultant appointed, following consultation documents finalised and agreed by the Council	September 2020	Summer 2020	May 2020	March 2020	Summer 2020
Yr 2 Action Plan Year 1 projects identified, progressed/ completed and reviewed.	September 2021	Summer 2021	May 2021	March 2021	Summer 2021
Yr 3 Action Plan Year 2 projects updated, new projects identified, established projects completed and reviewed.	September 2022	Summer 2022	May 2022	March 2022	Summer 2022

#### **4 FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY**

- 4.1 All costs associated with year 1 of this project, to deliver the outcomes set out in Table 2, can be met from the awarded Planning Delivery Fund. The costs of a Project Officer post to continue the project beyond year one will be sought from Historic England through discussion, this may involve a bidding process. The identified projects will be considered for inclusion in formal capital bids made by the Planning

service through the Council's own processes, as appropriate, or for funding to be secured by other relevant mechanisms including future rounds of the Planning Delivery Fund, external funding sources and any section 106 funds specifically secured for the historic environment.

## 5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 the Council has a duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. In addition, para 185 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, which should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and also the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that the conservation of the historic environment can bring. It is expected that the Council will consult when the proposals are at a draft stage in line with best practice and as outlined in the 'Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' by Historic England 2016 (revised 2017).

## 6 RISK MANAGEMENT

**Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation**

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Uncontrolled Risk</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Controlled Risk</b>
That the consultant does not fulfil the requirements of the brief	High	Ensure through the procurement process that the chosen consultant has the required expertise and experience in this type of project work; regular project meetings are to be agreed to ensure milestones are met and deadlines kept.	Low
That funding cannot be secured to implement the agreed Action Plan	High	Continue to pursue opportunities for funding and engage with stakeholders to ensure that those opportunities are maximised.	Low
That Historic England does not provide funding for a Project Officer to support and drive	Medium	Discussions ongoing over the last two years indicate that HE is prepared to make	Low

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Uncontrolled Risk</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Controlled Risk</b>
the implementation of the agreed Action Plan		that financial commitment due to the importance of heritage in this borough.	
That the Borough Local Plan is not adopted prior to the adoption of the Heritage Strategy SPD	Medium	That the Heritage Strategy can be adopted against the relevant policies contained in the adopted Local Plan 1999.	Low

## **7 POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

- 7.1 There is the possibility of enquiries from the public relating to this project that may involve front line staff.

## **8 CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 As part of the project, the Strategy and Action Plan will be drafted by the consultants with input from communities across the borough together with other interested local parties. The final drafts of the document will be subject to both internal consultation and wider public consultation as required by the Act and in line with accepted good practice. This will include letters to Councillors; to relevant local bodies and groups, such as Parish Councils, local history societies, National Amenity Societies and statutory bodies, such as Historic England. The draft documents will be available to view in local libraries, on the Council and the project web sites, and in the Urban Room proposed as part of the project. An Urban Room creates a physical space where people can go to understand, debate and get involved in the past, present and future of the place where they live, work and play – where and what the urban room consists of in this context will require further consideration. All proposals will be advertised locally and be subject to public meetings, run and attended by the consultants.

- 8.2 All consultation responses will be reported to Cabinet prior to adopting the documents.

## **9 TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

### **9.1 Table 5: Implementation timetable**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
May 2019	Tender process commenced.
April 2020	First draft of both documents following engagement detailed in the brief.
May/June 2020	Drafts out to public consultation.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
September 2020	Final documents to Full Council for adoption.

## 10 APPENDICES

10.1 The appendices to the report are as follows:

- Appendix 1: Brief for Borough Wide Heritage Strategy and Action Plan (electronic format)

## 11 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

Historic England 'Understanding Place Historic Area Assessment' 2017

Historic England 'Conservation Area, Designation Appraisal and Management' Advice Note 2016

## 12 CONSULTATION

<b>Name of consultee</b>	<b>Post held</b>	<b>Date issued for comment</b>	<b>Date returned with comments</b>
Cllr Coppinger	Lead Member	5.04.19	
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	5.04.19	
Russell O'Keefe	Executive Director	5.04.19	
Rob Stubbs	Section 151 Officer	5.04.19	
Louisa Dean	Communications	5.04.19	

## REPORT HISTORY

<b>Decision type:</b>	<b>Urgency item?</b>	<b>To Follow item?</b>
Key decision entered onto forward Plan on xx 2019	No	No
<p>Report Author: Victoria Goldberg, Development Management Manager- Enforcement and Conservation</p> <p>Sarah Harper, Principal Conservation Officer</p>		

