

Report to Cabinet

Subject: Gedling Borough Heritage Strategy

Date: 3 May 2018

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Wards Affected

1.1 All.

Purpose

2.1 To adopt a new Gedling Borough Heritage Strategy.

Key Decision

3.1 This is not a key decision.

Background

4.1 The Borough has heritage of local, regional, national and international significance. Key heritage landmarks include Newstead Abbey, Papplewick Pumping Station and Bestwood Winding Engine, while local individuals of unique historic significance include William Lee, Richard Parkes Bonington and Thomas Hawkesley. Locally there are nine Scheduled Ancient Monuments and the borough's varied natural environment includes the valley of the River Trent, the rare and distinctive landscapes of the Dumbles and former coalfields and settlements at the edge of Sherwood Forest. Ancient history, agriculture, industry and natural history have all contributed to a vibrant strong social history, reflective of the Borough's diversity.

4.2 Until recently, the Borough Council had been relatively passive in taking forward heritage. It has always valued the work of the Borough's community Local History Groups, offering them platforms to promote their work at community events like Arnold Carnival, and uses its planning powers to identify and protect historic buildings and landscapes. But the Council had not taken a leading role in bringing together community and voluntary groups to explore and

promote the heritage of the Borough as a whole.

4.3 With the advent of the Gedling Country Park came a realisation of the value of heritage in promoting community engagement, along with a recognition of the mutual value in community groups raising awareness of and protecting heritage, of which the Park forms a key element. The Council has also recognised the value of heritage in helping to promote regeneration; the local and national tourism economy and community identity and belonging.

4.4 The creation of the Gedling Borough Heritage Forum in 2017 was the first step in a fundamental reassessment of the Council's role in heritage and its importance to the Borough in future. The Forum brings together a range of community and voluntary groups with an interest in the Borough's heritage. It also aims to reflect and promote the diversity of the Borough and the diversity of heritage that flows from this.

4.5 The development of a Strategy was the next key step in taking forward the Borough Council's renewed commitment to heritage. In February 2018, the Council publicly consulted on the Draft Heritage Strategy. This included an on-line feedback form and also a presentation and discussion at the Gedling Heritage Forum meeting. Partners such as Nottinghamshire County Council, our Parish Councils, Historic England and Heritage Lottery Fund were also asked for their views.

4.6 The final Strategy document can be found at Appendix A. It has drawn upon this feedback from our partners and the community. Consultation can be found at Appendix C. The new document sets our future strategic direction for heritage:

- We want to bring together and share the Borough's rich and diverse heritage, to present a more cohesive view of the Borough's heritage as a whole.
- We want to explore areas of common interest and identity, reflecting cultural and social elements, as well as exploring diversity and difference.
- We want to promote a greater sense of common ownership and interest in the history of the Borough, as well as of the communities that make up the Borough.
- We want to use heritage as a driver for community regeneration across the Borough as a whole and in particular in its more deprived communities.

4.7 Strategy delivery will be built around five main themes – Authentic; Engaging; Inspirational; Ownership and Understanding – and a set of initial high-level actions to take the Borough have been identified:

- Deliver Gedling Heritage Interpretation Project

- Support Delivery of Local Plan
- Develop plans and funding options for Gedling Country Park Visitor Centre
- Work with owners and operators of key historic assets to explore improvements to fabric of and accessibility to the Borough's main historic assets
- Update the Buildings at Risk register
- Explore and further develop plans for a Gedling Borough Heritage Way
- Improve and consolidate governance of the Borough's Heritage

4.8 Regard must be had to the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between protected groups, including consideration of the Equality Impact assessment attached at Appendix B to this report.

Proposal

5.1 It is proposed that:

- Cabinet adopts the Gedling Borough Heritage Strategy, while recognising its delivery will be determined within the parameters of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.
- Council officers continue to work alongside and develop the Gedling Heritage Forum as a means of engaging with the wide range of key stakeholders with an interest and involvement in the Borough's heritage.

Alternative Options

6.1 For Cabinet not to adopt the proposed Gedling Borough Heritage Strategy. However, this approach would weaken the Council's and wider borough's position to develop a coordinated and strategically driven plan to access external funding required to achieve our Heritage vision. Funding partners such as Heritage Lottery Fund have specifically encouraged the Council to develop a Strategy for Heritage that informs future funding bids.

Financial Implications

7.1 There are no significant funding implications in adopting the Strategy, which sets out future aspirations for understanding, managing and interpreting the borough's heritage.

7.2 The development and delivery of its high level actions will require additional resource. This Action Plan will need to be considered in the context of

current budgetary pressures facing the Council, its partners and local community organisations.

7.3 Some external funding has already been successfully obtained, for example the Heritage Lottery funded Gedling Borough Heritage Interpretation Project. Plans to seek other funding will need to be developed working with our agency and community partners. Some future projects may require a commitment for match funding from the Council; each business case will need to be determined on an individual project basis.

7.4 Any future investment will be subject to Business Cases and financial assessment including availability of any potential match funding, and any identified budget requirement will be the subject of a resource development bid in accordance with the usual budget processes.

Appendices

Appendix A – Gedling Borough Heritage Strategy

Appendix B – Gedling Borough Heritage Strategy Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix C – Draft Gedling Heritage Strategy Consultation Feedback Summary

Background Papers

None.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Adopts the Gedling Borough Heritage Strategy, while recognising its delivery will be determined within the parameters of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.
- Approve Council officers to work alongside and develop the Gedling Heritage Forum as a means of engaging with the wide range of key stakeholders with an interest and involvement in the Borough's heritage.

Reasons for Recommendations

- An adopted Heritage Strategy will inform external funding submissions to improve the profile, understanding, management and interpretation of the Borough's heritage and the physical condition of its heritage assets.
- A thriving Heritage Forum gives a voice to local history and heritage groups and the potential collective weight to pursue future funding opportunities that support local community heritage assets.