

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT STANDING COMMITTEE

CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE FINAL REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the final report and recommendations of the review into conservation and heritage issues undertaken by the Communities and the Environment Standing Committee.

Information and Advice

2. The County Council's Communities and the Environment Standing Committee undertakes reviews on issues that are of concern to Members. Each review reports its findings and can make recommendations for improvement.
3. Members of the Communities & the Environment Standing Committee recently completed a review which examined the issues associated with conservation and heritage within the County including the protection of heritage assets, visitor demand and the development of a heritage protocol (or strategy).
4. The recommendations developed by the Standing Committee during the course of this review are set out below and the final report is attached as an appendix.
 - A Heritage Strategy should be developed for the County which would identify all the County's heritage assets and provide a strategic plan for their conservation and management.
 - Management of the most important County Council-owned heritage assets should be conservation-led and conservation management plans should be in place to guide marketing, business, access and transport plans and strategies.
 - A Heritage Protocol should be developed which would identify all NCC operations likely to have an impact on the historic environment and provide guidelines for avoiding or mitigating any negative impacts.
 - The knowledge and expertise within NCC's heritage service is a hugely valuable resource, providing advice on a range of issues, including development control, spatial planning and projects. To ensure that this knowledge and expertise is retained, options for charging for some services currently provided free of charge, such as planning advice to District and Borough Councils, should be explored.

- The Historic Environment Record is recognised as a strategic asset that should continue to be held and maintained at County level and should continue to be publicly accessible. Ways of funding the maintenance and upgrading of the HER should be investigated with the District Councils.
- The County Council should continue to play a lead role in heritage-led regeneration and greater engagement with volunteers to identify and monitor Heritage Assets at Risk should be investigated.
- The external facing role of the heritage specialists must be maintained, providing advice and support to local communities and groups to enable them to continue to play a role in managing their heritage assets.
- It is recognised that Members' Divisional Funding and the Local Improvement Scheme have been highly important in providing funding for small heritage projects and match funding for Heritage Lottery/ English Heritage funded projects. It is recommended that this role continues and is strengthened by ensuring that all Members are aware of heritage groups and opportunities in their wards.
- The County Council should continue to play a lead role in developing and delivering major heritage projects in partnership with other local authorities, groups and organisations. The development of such projects attracts significant amounts of investment into the County and provides opportunities for delivering economic benefits through, for example tourism.
- A marketing strategy should be developed, as part of the over-arching Heritage Strategy, and Members should be encouraged investigate opportunities to publicise events and projects in partnership with local groups.

Other Options Considered

5. None. Standing Committees are required to pass recommendations to Cabinet for consideration.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

6. The final report and recommendations are passed to Cabinet in order to allow the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s) to provide a response to the standing committee within two months.

Statutory and Policy Implications

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

8. It is considered that the recommendations contained within this report would, if implemented, make a positive contribution to the long-term sustainability of the historic environment of Nottinghamshire.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That Cabinet is asked to consider the report and recommendations of the Conservation and Heritage Review - which are set out in Appendix 1 to this report - and that an appropriate Cabinet Member attends a meeting of the Communities and the Environment Standing Committee within 2 months to provide a response.

**Councillor Sue Saddington,
Chair of Communities and the Environment Standing Committee**

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (SLB 21/11/2011)

9. Cabinet is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report. The Delegation to Cabinet set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution confirms that Cabinet is to receive reports scrutinising the exercise of County Council functions from the Overview and Standing Committees. The Procedure Rules for Overview Committee and the Standing Committees set out in Part H of the Council Procedure Rules state that reports are to be presented to Cabinet if all proposals are consistent with the existing Budget and Policy Framework

Financial Comments (DJK 21.11.11)

10. The contents of this report are duly noted; there are no financial implications.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.