

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 NOVEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	<i>WIRRAL HERITAGE STRATEGY</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>DAVID GREEN</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR CHRIS MEADEN</i>
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Members are asked to approve the Wirral Heritage Strategy 2011-14 following a period of consultation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 That the committee approves the Wirral Heritage Strategy 2011-14 and action plan.

2.2 That a working group of officers is established to monitor the implementation of the Wirral Heritage Strategy.

2.3 That the post of Heritage Officer be made permanent.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 To enable the implementation of the Wirral Heritage Strategy.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 The committee received a draft Heritage Strategy at its meeting of 10 March 2011 and agreed to its circulation for consultation and comment amongst interested groups. That consultation has now been completed (see section 7.0) and the final version and action plan is presented for approval by the committee.

4.2 This is Wirral's first Heritage Strategy and its purpose is to set out a comprehensive and integrated Heritage framework which will form the basis for heritage activities in the short and medium term and establish principles to be followed in the longer term.

Its overall vision is:

“To ensure that Wirral’s heritage is protected, managed, enhanced and used to meet the educational, recreational and sustainable needs of local people, visitors and potential investors to the borough.”

The strategy objectives are:

- To promote, celebrate and communicate the value of the heritage of Wirral as a source of national significance and local civic and community pride;
- To identify, recognise and give an understanding of Wirral’s heritage, which will inform future management and development;
- To actively promote the role and opportunities presented by heritage in terms of the wider regeneration, economic and tourism development of the borough and to provide a framework for investment;
- To ensure the highest standards of stewardship, management and protection of heritage assets, including buildings, conservation areas, natural or man-made landscapes and art and historical collections;
- To promote community participation in heritage and to maximise the contribution heritage makes to education, lifelong learning and social development;
- To ensure that Wirral’s heritage is widely accessible can be enjoyed and understood by the widest possible audience, including those who have traditionally been excluded from heritage activity.

4.3 The strategy identifies key issues and proposed actions for five thematic areas.

- **Stewardship and Protection** – conserving Wirral’s heritage for future generations;
- **Regeneration** – using heritage as a driver for economic development, inward investment and supporting sustainable communities;
- **Learning** – maximising the role of heritage in supporting education, training and life-long learning;
- **Participation** – ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to access, enjoy and participate in heritage;
- **Celebration** – recognising and utilising the part heritage can play in promoting local identity, social cohesion and civic and community pride.

4.4 The heritage resource is by its nature is fragmented and involves a wide ranging and diverse group of organisations, agencies, individuals and volunteer

groups. The strategy proposes the promotion and development of collaborative working with external agencies and across council departments. Heritage projects would be assessed against agreed criteria and the Heritage Strategy and its action plan would be monitored and updated by a Heritage Steering Group composed of council officers and key external partners.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 Without a Heritage Strategy, Wirral could fail in properly protecting its heritage assets and lose out on the opportunity to secure available funding for heritage restoration and preservation.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 None at this stage.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 A priority in developing this Strategy has been to engage local people throughout the process. The consultation draft was sent to over 200 local organisations and copies were available in museums and libraries. In July a community consultation day was held in Birkenhead Town Hall and separate consultation exercises were undertaken with young people.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 One of the Strategy objectives is to promote community participation and voluntary, community and faith organisations will all have a key role to play in its development and implementation.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 9.1 There is a budget of £135,000 for heritage projects which is used to support a wide range of initiatives.
- 9.2 The heritage outreach officer has been in post since 1 March 2010 and has worked closely with voluntary organisations, external bodies and council officers to develop the Heritage Strategy and events such as the Heritage Open Days. The post is part-time and is due to cease in February 2012. It is proposed that the post be made full time and permanent, funded from existing budgets and incorporated into the structure of the Museum Service.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are none arising from this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are none arising from this report.

11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- (a) Is an EIA required? No

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are none arising from this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are none arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Wirral's Heritage Strategy 2011-2014.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

No additional material.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Sustainable Communities	10 March 2011