

Swindon Heritage Strategy

Cabinet

Date: 11th December 2013

Author:	Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Culture Board Director, Service Delivery
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 Swindon has a unique heritage and history which defines our town and our culture. The One Swindon primary strategic framework sets a specific priority that “Everyone is enjoying sport, leisure and culture opportunities”. The development of a Heritage Strategy for Swindon recognises that focusing on heritage can contribute to a number of One Swindon Outcomes bringing about many social and economic benefits.
- 1.2 This report summarises the findings of the public consultation on the draft Swindon Heritage Strategy and presents an updated strategy, which reflects the feedback received, for formal adoption by Cabinet.
- 1.3 It was agreed by Cabinet in December 2012 (Cabinet Minute 74, 2012/13 refers) to bring a further report at this time.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the outcomes of the consultation undertaken with local and regional residents, stakeholders and partners.
- 2.2 Adopt the Swindon Heritage Strategy, as set out in Appendix 1, as the key document that will guide all future decisions affecting the heritage of Swindon.
- 2.3 Support the Board Director, Service Delivery and the Swindon Heritage Board to enable the effective delivery of the Swindon Heritage Strategy.

3. Detail

- 3.1 In December 2012, the Cabinet considered a draft Swindon Heritage Strategy and endorsed that the draft strategy to go forward for public consultation.
- 3.2 Following the Cabinet’s decision, a working group of the Swindon Heritage Board was established to oversee and manage the public consultation process.
- 3.3 The group devised and agreed a Consultation Briefing Document (Background Paper 1).

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Helen Miah, Direct Dial Telephone Number 07766368261, hmiah@swindon.gov.uk.

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- 3.4 A questionnaire was designed, promoted and distributed both online via Survey Monkey and in hard copy via a wide range of outlets including Swindon Libraries and Museums, Swindon Borough Council website, Facebook, Twitter, local press and media and all the partner organisations of the Swindon Heritage Board. (Background Paper 2).
- 3.5 The working group was impressed by the excellent response to the survey with 335 individual responses received. It was agreed by the group that analysis of the results should therefore be undertaken by a specialist consultation professional and Phil Back Associates were commissioned by the Swindon Heritage Board to undertake this work.
- 3.6 The detailed Consultation Analysis Report prepared by Phil Back was presented to the Swindon Heritage Board in June 2013 (Background Paper 3). The overarching findings from the consultation were that there was overwhelming support for the development of a heritage strategy for Swindon and a high level of consensus on the key priorities as set out in the draft strategy.
- 3.7 However, there were key recommendations in the responses to the consultation about the use of language, the definition of heritage, a requirement for an accompanying Action Plan, clear structure for the strategy and need to undertake further work to engage with young people. All of these have been addressed in the strategy now recommended for endorsement.
- 3.8 The Board accepted the findings of the Consultation Report and tasked a further working group to redraft the strategy to reflect these recommendations.
- 3.9 The updated Strategy was presented to the Swindon Heritage Board in September 2013 and the Board agreed to recommend this version to Cabinet for formal approval and adoption. (Appendix 1)

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could choose not to adopt a Heritage Strategy and the various organisations across the Borough could continue to attempt to improve and enhance the impact of our heritage without a detailed overarching framework with which to coordinate and prioritise efforts. In times of reduced resources it would seem appropriate to seek to maximise any investment through a co-ordinated and targeted approach.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 Adoption of the Swindon Heritage Strategy does not have any immediate, direct financial implications. However, delivery of the accompanying Action Plan will require appropriate resources to be available. It is anticipated that resources will be sought, subject to business case development, from a number of different

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sources including Swindon Borough Council revenue and capital budgets, Lottery and grant applications, trusts, foundations and private donations for all elements of the strategy to be successfully delivered.

- 5.2 Any actions that will require Swindon Borough Council resources will either be managed within delegated budgets or be subject to further Cabinet Reports.
- 5.3 A separate report on this agenda details a proposed approach to the Swindon Museum and Art Gallery and sets out a requirement for feasibility money to further develop the proposal.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.4 Legal and Human Rights implications have been taken into account in the drafting of this report and it is believed its recommendations are compatible with Convention rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.5 There are no other implications identified at this time. The Council has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Prevention of Heritage Crime with English Heritage.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.6 The Swindon Heritage Strategy has been developed to align with the One Swindon objectives specifically “I Like Where I Live” and “Everyone is Enjoying Leisure and Culture Activities”. It also responds to the key strategic objective to make the best use of resources inside and outside the Council as well as having key social and economic benefits and outcomes.

5.7 Diversity Impact Assessment

A Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed and does not identify any adverse impacts of adopting this strategy. Copies can be obtained from the report author.

Risk Management

- 5.8 The main risk that the Heritage Strategy faces, apart from a lack of funding for delivery of the action plan, is that it is not widely adopted and supported by all of the various groups and individuals who have a passion for enhancing Swindon’s heritage. This would restrict its’ ability to act as a prioritisation plan to maximise the scarce resources that might be available particularly from Lottery distributors. For the strategy to be a success it is also vital that it is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Swindon Heritage Board with continuous input from across the

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heritage sector. Activities need to be properly resourced and owned with appropriate levels of challenge.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.
- 6.2 The Swindon Heritage Board

7. Background Papers

All background papers are available from the Report Author and online.

- 7.1 Paper 1 – Consultation Briefing Document
- 7.2 Paper 2 – Consultation Questionnaire
- 7.3 Paper 3 – Consultation Analysis Report – A Future for our Past?

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 Swindon Heritage Strategy

9. Key Decision/Decision in Forward Plan

- 9.1 This is a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme Forward Plan for December 2013.