



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Wellbeing Cabinet Board

14 March 2024

Report of the Head of Leisure, Tourism, Heritage & Culture and Head of Property and Regeneration.

Matter for Decision.

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Report Title:

Heritage Strategy

Purpose of the Report:

This report is presented to the Education Cabinet Board for adoption of Neath Port Talbot's first Heritage Strategy. Following the Draft Heritage Strategy presented to the Cabinet on 20th September 2023.

Executive Summary:

This report outlines the background behind the Heritage Strategy and the impact this will have on conserving our heritage assets for generations to come. The Heritage Strategy aligns with the Culture Strategy and Destination Management Plan and provides a framework for the Council and its partners in delivering on the Council's Wellbeing Objective 3 aims going forward.

The Strategy highlights programmes, training opportunities, partnership working, resourcing and investment requirements to deliver the actions to protect our Historic Environment.

Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the ***Heritage NPT*** Project is responsible for producing a Heritage Strategy for the County Borough. The Strategy sets out the historical and cultural features in the borough and actions for its future care. The Strategy's Action Plan outlines a broad approach to conservation, maintenance and enhancement of assets and viable propositions for alternative uses and possible benefits, (including economic, educational, social and wellbeing). A key tenet of the Strategy is supporting community volunteers and heritage groups to continue their crucial role in the conserving and championing of the borough's heritage.

The recommendation is for the formal adoption by Cabinet of the Heritage Strategy, to align with the Culture Strategy and Destination Management Plan that were adopted in September 2023.

Background:

This report follows the Draft Heritage Strategy Report and IIA from 20th September 2023.

The Let's Talk Campaign demonstrated a clear public will to invest in and develop our Culture and Heritage sector. As a result, one of the 4 wellbeing objectives was set to specifically deliver on this area; *Our local environment, heritage and culture can be enjoyed by future generations.*

Consequently, Culture, Destination and Heritage strategies have been commissioned to provide the strategic narrative for this objective. Their aim is to provide a framework from which the Council, its partners and the wider community can be built upon to actively conserve, improve and enjoy our significant Historic Environment,

treasure the Welsh language and actively engage with the rich sporting, cultural and industrial heritage of the area.

All three strategies have been created with the wider policy context in view, particularly the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, and are designed to ensure that both the seven goals and five ways of working of the act are embedded throughout the actions of both the Council and other stakeholders.

This Strategy ensures the special qualities of our historic assets are protected, enhanced and enjoyed by our future generations. The project has enabled the recruitment of a community heritage officer to assist the local heritage groups to be sustainable and autonomous and enable them to protect and promote their own local heritage and culture. The project teaches communities how to take ownership and stewardship of their local heritage and improve access to their cultural heritage. It will ensure our arts, culture and heritage organisations are independent and able to prosper.

The main principles of the Heritage Strategy are:

- Inform Planning Policy for the future use of listed structures and heritage sites.
- Develop Action Plans and Conservation Management Plans to protect and secure our heritage stock.
- Support partnership working that will achieve agreed priorities.
- Support local heritage groups to take ownership of their local heritage and promote access to culture and heritage within their local communities.
- Develop a list of capital projects for delivery
- Protect, enhance and promote NPT's heritage and cultural assets.

- Agree priorities for project investment.
- Secure external funding streams to assist community groups, the public and private sector to deliver aspirational projects
- Meet the aims and objectives of Cadw Conservation Principles:
 1. Historic assets should be managed to sustain their values
 2. Understanding the significance of historic assets
 3. The historic environment is a shared resource
 4. Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment

Further funding was recently secured from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to extend the 2 Heritage posts for a further 2 years to administer and support delivery of the Heritage Strategy's Action Plan.

Financial Impacts:

The delivery of the Action Plan will have implications for additional resources, but delivering the projects within the Action Plan is the responsibility of all Partners.

To deliver projects identified in the Action Plan, along with other future projects, revenue and capital investment will be required. These costs are not yet identifiable. When projects are identified with financial implications, they will be subject to a further cabinet report for approval.

We will seek grant funding to deliver projects whenever possible.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund's *Heritage Places* scheme has allocated £10 million of funding to Neath Port Talbot, the first *Heritage Place* in Wales.

Private, Public and Third Sector groups and other organisations are eligible to apply individually or collectively for this funding, to deliver strategic capital and revenue projects.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage impact assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment was required.

An overview of the Integrated Impact Assessment has been included below in summary form only and it is essential that Members read the Integrated Impact Assessment, which is attached to the report at Appendix 2, for the purposes of the meeting.

The strategy has a positive impact upon the achievement of Wellbeing Objective 3 and 4 of the NPT Corporate Plan.

Through the range of actions identified within the strategy there are further positive impacts on the use and promotion of the Welsh language.

By integrating sustainability into the design of projects, which arise from the strategy, there are opportunities presented to enhance biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems.

The strategy embraces all 5 sustainable development principles and in the long term will result in developing a sense of pride in Neath Port Talbot.

There are further positive impacts to improve access and facilities for individuals of all ages and of all abilities, through the range of actions identified within the strategy.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

The Heritage Strategy is designed to have a positive impact on our valleys communities by enhancing and enriching the Heritage in those communities.

The Strategy's action plan will provide the delivery tool to promote and celebrate local heritage, drive economic prosperity and facilitate Improvements to historic buildings, parks and landscapes

Workforce Impacts:

This report will have a positive impact on the workforce as two posts have been retained.

Legal Impacts:

There are no legal impacts associated with this report

Risk Management Impacts:

The Heritage Strategy sets out a framework that will in time, help reduce the Council's risk in terms of historic building maintenance and conservation management in particular.

Consultation:

An extensive consultation exercise was undertaken for the Heritage Strategy. The methodology and results of the consultation are shown in the Heritage Strategy Consultation Report.

Face to face, workshops were held with stakeholders, volunteer heritage groups, and online surveys, requesting feedback on how the public feel about the vision, objectives and actions to value and conserve their heritage and the positive impact it has on their wellbeing and the sustainability of their community groups.

A Consultation on the Heritage Strategy took place between October 9th and November 5th 2023. The results of the consultation process are reported to cabinet in the Heritage Strategy Consultation Report. The Report's findings have informed the Strategy and Action Plan.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Formally adopt the Heritage Strategy.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To conserve our local heritage and enable us to deliver the Wellbeing Objective 3: Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period

Appendices:

1. Heritage Strategy
2. Full IIA Heritage Strategy

List of Background Papers:

- Heritage Strategy Consultation Report
- Heritage Strategy Consultation Report (Impact & Inequalities)

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