

**CABINET 11 APRIL 2012**

**BATH PRESERVATION TRUST STATEMENTS**

**Agenda item 14: Temporary Display of Banners and Promotional Material**

Bath Preservation Trust welcomes the Council's intention to take a proactive approach to managing the display of banners and other promotional material for festivals and other public events. However the recommended approach (Option 3) seems to us to be heavy-handed and unnecessarily expensive.

In order to be effective, promotional material needs to be varied and contain an element of surprise. Maximising control in the way suggested in Option 3 may result in excessive consistency and therefore staleness, rather than the vitality and richness referred to in the paper before you.

We are also concerned that Option 3 appears to be driven, at least in part, by a desire to maximise the income stream to the Council. We recognise of course that in the current financial climate the Council needs to look for opportunities for income generation. However decisions on what is and is not appropriate in planning terms should not be influenced by the impact on potential income.

We are surprised that stakeholder engagement is the last stage of the recommended approach. If the Council is looking for support, stakeholders such as ourselves need to be involved from the start, not brought in at the end.

We would urge you to adopt **option 2** – production of informal or formal planning guidance focussing on design criteria (including the important issue of design of fixings) and setting out an objective methodology for assessing the suitability of sites and the duration of display. We would be willing – indeed keen! – to work with your officers to produce suitable guidance. As the preparation of the Sustainable Construction and Retrofitting SPD has demonstrated, joint working on issues such as these can be a very productive approach. If the guidance is well-considered, the process of obtaining advertisement consent on a case-by-case basis will be much easier than was the case with the 2009 application, and there will still be flexibility to accommodate variety and vitality.

Finally, we would urge that, whichever approach you decide to take, you should not seek to rush it through in order to make money from the display of the Olympic flags. It is much better to spend a little more time on collaborative working to get the policy right for the future.