

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Council	
MEETING DATE:	16 November 2010	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
TITLE:	World Heritage Site Management Plan	
WARDS:	City of Bath and surrounding wards	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix A: Draft World Heritage Site Management Plan (and Appendices)		
Appendix B: Executive Summary		
Appendix C: Summary of consultation responses		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The draft replacement City of Bath World Heritage Site Management Plan has been progressed to a stage where it is ready to be passed to central government for submission to UNESCO. The Council is asked to endorse the draft plan, and approve the submission.

2 RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to:

2.1 Endorse the draft replacement City of Bath World Heritage Site Management Plan, and recommend to the Cabinet Member for Development and Major Projects that it is approved for submission to UNESCO.

2.2 Note that further minor editorial changes to made to the document prior to submission.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The management plan is being prepared within allocated budgets.

3.2 The plan contains 71 actions, some of which are funded, and others for which funding must be sought (from external sources such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, etc). These include aspirations such as action 3a – ‘Support proposals for better facilities for the Council’s archives’. The Plan clarifies that inclusion of such items carries no guarantee that funding will be found and cannot be a promise of delivery. The plan must strike a balance between being visionary and deliverable, and inclusion of aspirations proves useful when bidding for funds from external sources.

4 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4.1 World Heritage cuts across many agendas, and will impact on the achievement of the following Council priorities:

- *Building communities where people feel safe and secure*
- *Sustainable growth*
- *Addressing the causes and effects of Climate Change*
- *Improving transport and the public realm*

5 THE REPORT

5.1 Bath is one of 28 UK sites warranting World Heritage Site status - the highest global accolade acknowledging outstanding heritage, and one of only a handful of sites worldwide where an entire city is designated. The financial impact of the tourist economy is significant, with 27% of the visitors stating that they visit for the built heritage, and world heritage therefore reflecting at least £122m of the £450m annual tourism income. World heritage has reached high prominence in recent years, with a fact finding UNESCO 'mission' visiting Bath in November 2008.

5.2 Bath is required by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation - the body overseeing world heritage) to have a management plan. The draft plan before the Council is the update of the existing 2003 version.

5.3 The plan follows a standard format developed in conjunction with English Heritage and used across most UK World Heritage Sites. It describes why the city is significant, identifying issues and pressures affecting it, and proposing an action plan addressing issues. It also incorporates actions designed to address points raised by the 2008 UNESCO mission, (and includes at appendix 7 the UNESCO committee decision made in response to the mission). Submission of a revised management plan by 2011 was one of the mission recommendations, who stated 'The World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS also note that a review of the management plan is currently in progress and that it will include and integrated and comprehensive Tourism Management Plan, and integrated Public Realm and Movement Strategy ... and an integrated Traffic Control Plan'.

5.4 The plan has been compiled by the Council's World Heritage Manager under the guidance of the World Heritage Site Steering Group, a partnership body with an independent chairman. The Council has seats on the Steering Group, and is the body responsible for delivery and funding of most actions within the plan. As such the Council has led the development of this draft. The document has been the subject of wider public consultation the details of which are set out in Section 8 below.

5.5 Following Council endorsement the draft plan will be passed to the Cabinet Member for Development and Major Projects for approval to submit. The World Heritage Site Steering Group will be asked to sign off the plan, which will then be submitted to Department Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). DCMS then pass the plan to their advisors on the historic environment, English Heritage, and to

UNESCO advisory bodies including the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). Following advice from these bodies, the plan is submitted, by 1 February 2011 to UNESCO, for consideration at their annual World Heritage Committee in Bahrain, July 2011. Assuming successful UNESCO adoption the plan will be passed back to the Council to adopt, or if necessary amend.

5.6 It should be noted from 5.5 that once passed to DCMS (the 'State Party') the plan becomes their document and may require amendment as necessary to receive the UNESCO approval – hence the recommendation for Council endorsement, not adoption, and the draft unpublished form of the document. DCMS have already been involved in developing the plan, and will work closely with this Council in any changes made. They would not unilaterally impose changes involving actions with financial consequences for the Council.

5.7 It should also be noted from 5.4 that the timetable for this process is rigid, and failure to meet submission deadlines to the UNESCO annual committee would result in a years delay and failure to meet Council assurances given to UNESCO following their 2008 mission.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 An equalities impact assessment has been carried out using corporate guidelines.

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Consultation began in December 2009 with an event involving approximately 120 representatives of local and national bodies. Public consultation on the draft plan followed from 26 August to 7 October 2010, and involved targeted email messages containing the draft document to all Bath and surrounding area councillors, and all attendees of the December 2009 event.

8.2 Leaflets advertising public consultation were distributed at heritage open days and other events, electronic copies of the draft plan were available on the web site and hard reference copies were available in libraries and council offices.

8.3 250 responses were received from 21 different non-Council bodies, and a summary is shown at appendix C. A sub group of the Steering Group identified the following 6 key priorities from consultation:

- i) Funding and Management of the World Heritage Site
- ii) Transport
- iii) Buffer Zone/ Setting
- iv) Planning Policy
- v) Public Realm

vi) Interpretation

8.4 The above 6 issues have been used to prioritise the action plan, shortening this section from the consultation version. Multiple changes have been made post consultation including re-ordering Chapter 5 to put issues alongside corresponding objectives, and strengthening of the main body text.

9 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

9.1 *Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Human Resources; Property; Young People; Human Rights; Corporate; Health & Safety; Impact on Staff; Other Legal Considerations*

10 ADVICE SOUGHT

10.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Council Solicitor) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

Contact person	Tony Crouch, World Heritage Manager, 01225 477584
Background papers	World Heritage Site Management Plan Appendices (x 11) have changed little since public consultation and can be viewed on the public consultation draft at: www.bathnes.gov.uk/worldheritagesite
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	