

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Full Council Meeting – 11th July 2019

Conservative Motion: Maintaining Our Heritage

To be moved by Cllr Paul Myers

Council notes:

1. That as a World Heritage site we have a duty to maintain the historic fabric of the city, evidenced by our recently approved Site Management Plan, which seeks to ensure that the city can continue to be enjoyed by future generations;
2. That the Council significantly benefits in income from Tourism and in order to maintain this income there is a commensurate requirement to ensure that the fabric of such a vital income generator is maintained;

Council subsequently believes:

3. In order to maintain the fabric of Bath as a World Heritage Site, it is vital to retain a pool of craftspeople with traditional skills in areas such as wood work/carpentry, plaster, stone work, lead and iron work and roofing;
4. That there have been discussions for some time about the prospect of reviewing the ability to pass skills on through education and training in order to ensure long term sustainability of specialist craft skills;
5. That despite the efforts of Universities and colleges there will always remain the need to build a strong apprenticeship link between the Craft Skills based businesses and educational institutions on the basis of skill development over years of practice;
6. That one of the fundamental issues is that people with vital traditional skills are perhaps least best well placed to address the long term big picture – because they are focused on their craft and making a living;
7. That despite discussions with representatives in the heritage craft skills trade they need some initial support to get a solution off ground, possibly for Council, in conjunction with its heritage partners to facilitate the creation of a Charitable Trust to propagate the retention of traditional craft skills;
8. That if successful, this initiative could also be a service we could export both nationally and internationally as an ability to preserve heritage infrastructure;

Therefore, this Council resolves to;

9. Bring together the heritage maintenance craft businesses, heritage bodies and the educational institutions to explore how they might create a Charitable Trust to focus on preserving traditional skills to maintain the fabric of the World Heritage Site;

10. In order to promote such careers to young people, the council should work with schools, the college and the universities to seek to create a post-14 Skills Academy for Bath & North East Somerset on a suitable site within the area.