

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting20th January 2011

1. Title of Item/Report

Stockton Heritage Strategy

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet considered a report, which presented the first Stockton Heritage Strategy, setting out the heritage of the area, showing how it had been preserved and interpreted, and proposing ways in which it could be further protected and celebrated. The Heritage Strategy brought together information from a range of sources and reflected the aspirations and interests of a number of organisations. It was expected that it would serve as a framework for those groups and any member of the public interested in finding out about and adding to our understanding of Stockton's heritage.

Stockton Renaissance Culture Partnership defined 'Raising the profile of our heritage' as a priority objective for the period 2008 – 2012, seeking to develop our museums and heritage assets to tell the fascinating story of the borough's history and to help develop a sense of community pride. Stockton Borough Council Museum Service has increasingly focused its efforts on telling the Stockton story, utilising its collection to illustrate that story, and attracting investment into Preston Hall Museum toward the same purpose.

Stockton had a rich and long history, including significant, Anglo-Saxon Roman, Viking, and Medieval settlements, a major role in the industrial revolution and nineteenth century industrial innovation, a notable part on our World War efforts, and numerous fascinating local events and accounts showing how Stockton and its people had changed the world.

There was a huge public appetite for history and heritage amongst the residents of the Borough. People were fascinated about the place they live in and its position in the sweep of social and technological progress. New technology had generated exciting new opportunities for Stockton to connect and reveal aspects of our history, and to release a wealth of knowledge and information from local people. Individuals were tracing their ancestry and revealing connections that helped them feel a

sense of belonging and continuity. The online treasure chest 'Picture Stockton' was full of images and narratives contributed by the people of the area, adding texture and detail to the local story.

The production of the Heritage Strategy had involved a wide range of interested parties, including Tees Archaeology, Tees Valley Archives, Stockton Industrial Heritage Society and others. A vast amount of information had been gathered. The challenge of collating, checking, and integrating the information into a single readable document had been a major one.

Members were provided with the first Stockton Heritage Strategy, which would be published online and maintained as a living and evolving document.

The subject was essentially thematic, but was concerned with specific geographic sites in some instances, and people in other instances, in some cases specific chronologies and historic periods were the defining criteria. It was envisaged that the online resource based on the Heritage Strategy would allow people to approach it and interrogate a subject from thematic, chronological or geographical terms, or to search for information about particular individuals. This web based collection of information, links, and opportunities for user generated content should be available to launch in the early summer 2011.

The Strategy document would be divided into 4 main sections;

- an introduction, a summary of the heritage of the area,
- some illustrations of ways in which we had protected and revealed our heritage to date,
- guidance on how we might further protect and celebrate our heritage in the future
- a list of the famous or important individuals associated with Stockton, providing information about the person and their achievements.

A more detailed Action Plan would follow but the intention was for the Heritage Strategy to encourage and guide anyone wishing to take part in celebrating and preserving Stockton's heritage. The Action Plan for the Council and the public funded agencies would be narrower and less diverse than the full potential range of actions delivered by the wider community and the many interested groups.

RESOLVED that the 2011 Stockton Heritage Strategy be approved for publication.

3. Reasons for the Decision

There were many local and regional strategies relating to heritage, and activities which celebrated Stockton's history, but they were not brought together in any one plan, and there were gaps.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on 28 January 2011

Proper Officer
25 January 2011