

Title of meeting: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 27th July 2021

Subject: A heritage strategy for Portsmouth

Report by: Stephen Baily, Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Wards affected: n/a

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The report seeks approval to start a wider consultation on a heritage strategy for Portsmouth.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **It is recommended that:**
- i. **Approval is given for the draft heritage strategy to go out to consultation**

3. Background

- 3.1 Portsmouth is a unique in being largely an island city, with a rich and diverse historic built environment. It has been shaped for most of its history by the strategic advantages of its excellent deep water harbour and its association with the Royal Navy which stretches back almost a thousand years. Our heritage has shaped what and how we are as a city, and will continue to influence where we are going.
- 3.2 Understanding and interpreting the heritage story for the city is hugely important, to foster the sense of civic identity, but also because of the importance of our heritage in creating the future for Portsmouth. Heritage themes and assets are crucial to our economic success in years to come. Understanding the past gives us a sense of the present and confidence for the future.
- 3.3 Over the last year, there has been a wide-ranging, community-led exercise in Portsmouth to describe a vision for the city's future – including reflecting the



issues that matter to people in the light of the pandemic. Thousands of contributions were received and considered by a steering group of public, private and third sector agencies in the city to enable a vision for Portsmouth in 2040 to be articulated. This vision reflected not just the things people wanted to see, but also the way they want the city to feel. Values described by residents included a community focus, collaboration, equality, respect and innovation.

- 3.4 One of the themes that came through very strongly was the importance of heritage and a statement emerged in the vision that in 2040:

"People in Portsmouth enjoy a vibrant cultural scene that makes the most of our location, our heritage and our creative energy. We are full of things to do and places to be, welcoming locals and visitors with diverse events, attractions and venues that positively benefit our people and our city. We are known locally, regionally and internationally as a great waterfront and city destination that brings people together."

- 3.5 For some time, we have not had a Heritage Strategy in the city to guide how we will conserve and interpret the heritage of Portsmouth, and ensure that heritage is key to the economic and health outcomes to the city. A draft document has therefore been developed (attached as Appendix 1) which sets out a vision for heritage in Portsmouth, and identifies some key themes for future working in the city around this, also highlighting some projects that can be taken forward to support this. The draft has been consulted with Historic England as a key stakeholder for heritage in the city.

4. A heritage strategy for Portsmouth

- 4.1 Our vision is to create a city where our heritage is understood, celebrated and integral to the city's life and success.

- 4.2 If this vision is to be achieved, then the draft strategy identifies some things that we will very particularly need to do:

- reinforce and develop Portsmouth's distinct historic identity
- invest in the fabric of historic assets and realise viable uses
- ensure that heritage is an integral part of the economic success for the city in the future
- Engage and actively involve people - residents and visitors - in our heritage environment, assets and stories.

- 4.3 The city council will play a leading role in this as the owner of many of the city's heritage assets, but other partners will be critical to the success of this strategy. The city is fortunate in the number of organisations and individuals with heritage expertise and interest. We now want to consult with these groups to ensure that the strategic working for the city around heritage fully reflects the knowledge, skills and experience in the city, and matches this against key priorities.



4.4 The draft document also identifies a number of projects where assets need to be supported. These have broadly been grouped as:

- Historic Fortifications
- Historic Naval Base
- Portsea
- Wider Cultural & Industrial Heritage
- Public realm

4.5 As part of the consultation, we will seek any further input on describing the issues relating to these areas, and views on appropriate solutions. We will also seek views particularly on engaging with the wider community on the heritage agenda, where many organisations in the city have a strong track record of developing projects that create interest and excitement.

5. Consultation

5.1 The Heritage Strategy is not a statutory document, so there is no set framework for consultation. However, we want to ensure that there is the opportunity for broad feedback and engagement. Therefore, it is recommended that the document is consulted for a period of 2 months, throughout August and September, with a final strategy to be presented to Cabinet, taking account of all the feedback in October.

6. Reasons for recommendations

6.1 It is important that for a city of Portsmouth's heritage interest, there is a strategy that sets out how we will approach this heritage, and how the work might be prioritised. It is also useful to have a document that sets out these intentions for bodies who we may approach for support for schemes in the city, including funding support.

6.2 There are many sources of expertise in the city, and so it is recommended that a broad consultation now takes place to ensure that the strategic development in the city can benefit from the collective skills, knowledge, experience and perspectives.

7. Integrated impact assessment

7.1 The document is a draft for consultation so does not require a full integrated assessment at this time. The consultation period will enable us to gather further information to enable a full assessment to take place.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendation in this report
- 8.2 As mentioned in the body of the report, the Heritage Strategy is non-statutory. Consequently, there is no specifically prescribed procedure or steps which must be followed for its development or approval.

9. Director of Finance's comments

- 9.1 The actions proposed in this report will be funded from the existing service portfolio budgets, as approved by Full Council. Any potential additional expenditure arising from the final strategy will be addressed in a future report.

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Signed by: Stephen Baily, Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Appendices: Appendix 1 - draft Heritage Strategy for Portsmouth

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by:

Stephen Baily, Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services & Tristan Samuels,
Director of Regeneration