

Subject:	Heritage Assets Register - Options		
Date of Meeting:	25 November 2021		
Report of:	Executive Director Environment, Economy and Culture		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report has been prepared in response to a Notice of Motion agreed at Council in January 2021 calling for an officer report to explore options for setting up an independent group with the aim of establishing a list of all heritage assets for which the Council has responsibility. This includes those in situ and those in storage and undergoing repair elsewhere.
- 1.2 This report summarises the options that have been considered (see appendix 1) and the benefits and disadvantages of each option. It concludes that the preferred option is for a Register of 'non-building' heritage assets be prepared by lead officers in asset-owning council teams (based on existing lists); and to offer training on the significance of those assets for staff and contractors working for asset-owning teams.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the options for establishing a register of heritage assets owned by the council.
- 2.2 That the Committee agrees the preferred option for officers to prepare a Register of council-owned Heritage Assets (not including buildings) based on the list of current Listed Buildings and Local List against a timetable to be agreed in consultation with the Executive Director and joint Chairs. Further, for officers to ensure the lists are up to date; and officer leads (in each service) to ensure asset owning staff and contractors are aware of the importance of the assets.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 A Notice of Motion was agreed following an incident on the seafront where two listed heritage lanterns were taken from a skip by a member of the public (placed there in error by a highways contractor) and attempts were made to sell them. The lamps were subsequently recovered by the Highways Team and the

contractors advised that the lanterns are protected and should be repaired and retained.

3.2 The Notice of Motion, agreed at Council in January this year, stated the following:

This Council

1. Expresses regret over recent incidents relating to the loss of historic lanterns from the Brighton seafront;
2. Praises the actions of local investigative journalists for identifying said missing items; and
3. Calls for an officer report to the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee to explore options for setting up an independent group with the aim of establishing a list of all heritage assets – including those in situ, in storage and undergoing repair elsewhere – for which the Council has responsibility.

3.3 As requested, an options assessment sought by the notice of motion has been carried out and is set out in appendix 1. The three options and assessment are based on the following factors and assumptions:

- There are existing lists of local heritage assets in the city – the statutory list and ‘locally listed’ assets;
- the heritage assets to be included in the council-owned heritage assets register will not include ‘buildings’ (definition in appendix 1)
- work to be commissioned by the voluntary sector would need to follow a formal commissioning process led by council officers;
- work would need to be supported and overseen by an officer working group;
- council and staff resources are limited – support for the new Register would require prioritisation ahead of other work areas; and
- an assumption that the purpose of such a Register would be to protect and help maintain council-owned heritage assets.

3.5 The three options assessed are:

1. Commission a Heritage Register of council-owned assets from the Voluntary Sector (to be commissioned, supported and to have oversight from an officer working group) and published on website; or
2. Officers to review and use existing lists (statutory and local) of heritage assets as the basis for the Register of council owned assets, draw together a Heritage Asset Register (not including buildings) and provide training for officers (and contractors) in asset-owning teams to make them aware of the importance of assets; or
3. Do nothing

3.6 It is concluded that Option 2 (Officer Led – using Existing Heritage Lists) is the preferred option. Although commissioning a voluntary organisation to prepare the list removes the work from officers – officers would still need to prepare a comprehensive brief and formally commission the work. The successful voluntary group would also

require to be supported and overseen by officers – it is proposed an Officer Working Group would be needed to support the work. For these reasons, it is concluded that any resource benefits from a voluntary group preparing the Heritage Asset Register would be outweighed by the work created for officers. It is recognised, however, this arrangement would improve engagement and involvement of the successful voluntary group in identifying and listing assets of value.

3.7 It is considered that Option 2 represents a more efficient use of council resources and avoids potential duplication of existing heritage lists. There is an existing Statutory List and a Local List which includes buildings as well as structures and monuments considered of historic and heritage value (see appendix 2). These are published on the website. It is proposed that officers (led by identified leads in each asset-owning service) prepare a single list of council owned heritage assets that can be drawn from these lists. This can be published and updated and reviewed annually. This also allows for third sector interests and community groups involvement. They can use existing mechanisms for adding valued assets to the statutory or local lists (in the case of the statutory list this requires application to Historic England, who decide on these on behalf of the Secretary of State).

3.8 This option also proposes training for officers and contractors of asset-owning teams on the importance and value of heritage assets; as well as their protection and retention.

3.9 If Option 2 is agreed, work will be carried out in line with a timetable to be prepared and agreed by the TECC Committee joint Chairs and Executive Director.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 An options analysis has been carried out as part of the report – the details are set out in appendix 1.

4.2 Option 2 – Officer-led use of existing heritage lists is the preferred option

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 There has been no community engagement in preparing this report

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 In response to a Notice of Motion agreed at Council in January, options for preparing a Register of Council-owned Heritage Assets have been considered.

6.2 It is concluded that option 2, an officer-led Heritage Asset Register based on the statutory list and local list alongside training, is the preferred option.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

7.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations of this report. Costs associated with creating a new heritage asset register and providing training to Officers and contractors will be funded from existing revenue budget within the City Development & Regeneration service.

Finance Officer Consulted: John Lack

Date: 14/10/21

Legal Implications:

There are no direct legal implications arising from the report

7.2

Lawyer Consulted: Hilary Woodward

Date: 21/10/21

Equalities Implications:

7.3 None

Sustainability Implications:

7.4 None

Brexit Implications:

7.5 None

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

7.8 The proposed council-owned Heritage Assets Register will cover all areas of the city and will require input and participation from all asset-owning teams across council.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Options Assessment for a Heritage Assets Register
2. Briefing on existing Heritage Registers

Background Documents

1. [Brighton and Hove Statutory List](#) - summary
2. [Brighton and Hove Local List of Heritage Assets](#)

