

Subject:	Appointment of Heritage and Design Champions and Consideration of Heritage and Design Awards	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	29 th June 2011
Report of:	Director of Business	Portfolio Holder:	Regeneration
Key Decision:	No <input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Community Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached:	No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required: No	Attached:	No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That Cabinet appoints an Elected Member as its Heritage and Design Champion.
1.2	That Cabinet supports the concept of including a Heritage and Design Award to the Pride Awards on a three year cycle from 2013, with the precise details to be agreed between officers, the Portfolio Holder and any appointed Champion.
1.3	All future minor amendments to the strategy to be delegated to the Planning Manager in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to seek the views of Cabinet Members as to whether there would be support for appointing a Heritage and Design Champion. Separately views are sought as to whether there is enthusiasm for arranging a Heritage and Design Award for developments within the Borough.
- 2.2 The report has been produced as part of the Conservation Strategy agreed by Cabinet on the 17th February 2010.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **A clean and green Rossendale** – creating a better environment for all.
 - **A healthy and successful Rossendale** – supporting vibrant communities and a strong economy.
 - **Responsive and value for money local services** – responding to and meeting the different needs of customers and improving the cost effectiveness of services.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 The government has urged all local authorities in England to appoint a Heritage Champion. It has also called for all public bodies with a responsibility for delivering and managing the built environment, including all government departments, to appoint a Design Champion. It is

recommended that these appointments are made at elected member level. Advice, guidance and support for these initiatives is provided by English Heritage and CABE, (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) respectively. National, regional and local networking and training events are also held for Champions.

- 5.2 The role of a Heritage Champion is to enable a local authority to fulfil its role in protecting and managing the historic environment, so that it makes its full contribution to the economic and social wellbeing of the local community. The Champion normally works closely with a Council's professional heritage officer. By May 2010, 275 local authorities had appointed Heritage Champions. Locally they are found in Hyndburn, Bury, Bolton and Blackburn with Darwen.
- 5.3 The role of a Design Champion is to ensure that design issues are taken into account at each stage of the decision making process within a local authority. Whilst promoting the benefits of good design, they support and challenge colleagues to be design conscious clients and inspire others to do likewise. In 2006, 65% of local authorities had made an appointment.
- 5.4 There is a close relationship between the two roles, which complement each other for much of the time, although there are areas within each role that are unique. Therefore it is not uncommon for these roles to be held by the same individual, especially in smaller authorities.
- 5.5 The Council's Principal Conservation Officer has experience of these roles including involvement in the preparation of the initial promotional leaflet for Historic Environment Champions which was produced by English Heritage in 2004 (copy attached as Appendix A). This features a case study of his previous authority and a role description. The leaflet notes that whilst it may be appropriate for a portfolio holder to be a Champion, the role is also appropriate for a 'backbench' councillor or member of an Overview or Scrutiny Committee. Whilst a Senior Officer can also be a Champion, it is usual for an elected member to fulfil the role.
- 5.6 Heritage & Design Awards
In addition, a number of local authorities have adopted heritage and design awards as a means of promoting both the heritage of their area and improving the standards of design of new build and conversion work within it. If there is enthusiasm to provide such an award in Rossendale, it is suggested this could be done through the "Pride in Rossendale" ceremony.
- 5.7 Sponsorship and the involvement of the local press, local businesses and like-minded third sector groups such as Civic Societies, is also often encouraged with the award.
- 5.8 Whilst officers believe that an award scheme will promote higher standards of conservation and design within the Borough, the current lack of development activity will make it difficult to find an appropriate number of candidates in the short term. However the aspiration to run such an award scheme could be identified and promoted as an objective of the Council, making developers aware of the potential to apply for consideration under a scheme that would run in future years, say for 2013, and every three years thereafter.
- 5.9 The details of the scheme would be discussed with the Portfolio Holder and/or Champion (should one be appointed). Recommended categories for the awards would be:
- Heritage (a restoration, conversion or extension of a historic building or a new building in a historic context).
 - New-build (either a single building or group in any use category).

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

6.1 Any financial implications arising must be met from existing budget resources.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 Any legal implications are dealt with in the body of the report.

8. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

8.1 There are no human resource implications arising.

9. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

9.1 None

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The report requests cabinet appoint a member as Heritage and Design Champion. Officers are of the view such an appointment would reinforce the Council's commitment to these areas of activity. The report also seeks comments as to whether there is support for a Heritage and Design Award scheme. Officers are of the view this will raise the profile of the borough and its built heritage, both past and future, and will also raise development standards.

10.2 Within Rossendale, one member, who could be a 'back bencher', should be able to fulfil both Champion roles, or cabinet may wish to appoint a senior officer instead.

10.3 A cost effective Heritage and Design Awards scheme could be designed to operate on a three year cycle from 2013.

Appendices	
Appendix A	English Heritage Historic Environment Champions Leaflet 2004